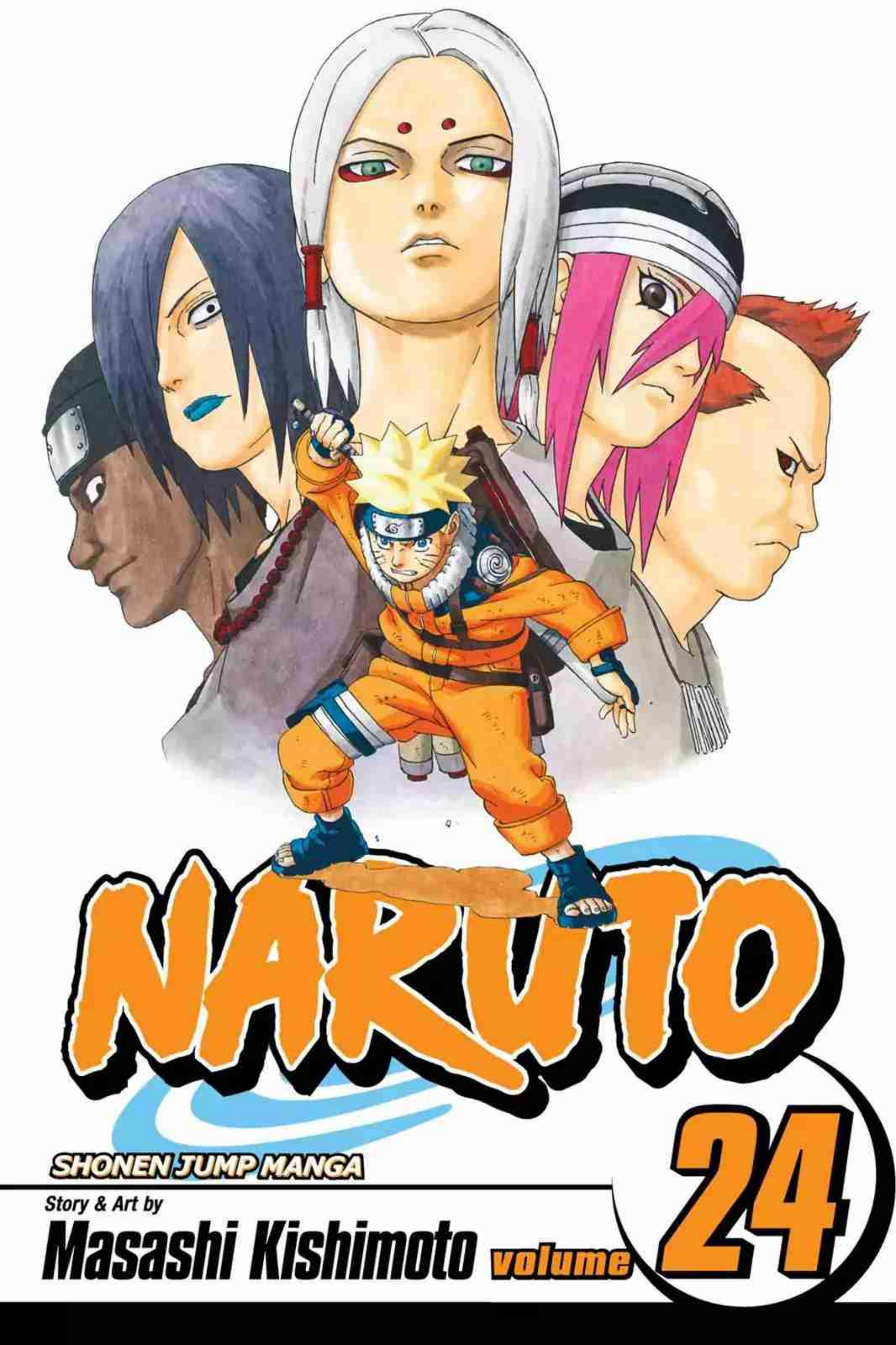

NARUTO
SHONEN JUMP MANGA
Story & Art by
Masashi Kishimoto
volume 24

岸本斉史

Naruto's already at volume 24! In volume 24 of *Dragon Ball**, Goku was about to fight Ginyu. It was so awesome, I was way too hyper reading it... I gotta make *Naruto* more exciting!!

—*Masashi Kishimoto, 2004*

(* Vol. 24 of *Dragon Ball* was released as Vol. 8 of *Dragon Ball Z* in the U.S. - Ed.)

Author/artist Masashi Kishimoto was born in 1974 in rural Okayama Prefecture, Japan. After spending time in art college, he won the Hop Step Award for new manga artists with his manga **Karakuri** (Mechanism). Kishimoto decided to base his next story on traditional Japanese culture. His first version of **Naruto**, drawn in 1997, was a one-shot story about fox spirits; his final version, which debuted in **Weekly Shonen Jump** in 1999, quickly became the most popular ninja manga in Japan.

NARUTO VOL. 24
The SHONEN JUMP Manga Edition

STORY AND ART BY MASASHI KISHIMOTO

Translation/Joe Yamazaki
English Adaptation/Naomi Kokubo & Eric-Jon Rössel Waugh
Letterer/Inori Fukuda Trant
Consultant/Mari Morimoto
Design/Yvonne Cai
Editor/Joel Enos

Editor in Chief, Books/Alvin Lu
Editor in Chief, Magazines/Marc Weidenbaum
VP of Publishing Licensing/Rika Inouye
VP of Sales/Gonzalo Ferreyra
Sr. VP of Marketing/Liza Coppola
Publisher/Hyoe Narita

NARUTO © 1999 by Masashi Kishimoto. All rights reserved.
First published in Japan in 1999 by SHUEISHA Inc., Tokyo. English translation rights in the United States of America, Canada and United Kingdom arranged by SHUEISHA Inc. The stories, characters and incidents mentioned in this publication are entirely fictional.

No portion of this book may be reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means without written permission from the copyright holders.

The rights of the author(s) of the work(s) in this publication to be so identified have been asserted in accordance with the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988. A CIP catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library.

Printed in the U.S.A.

Published by VIZ Media, LLC
P.O. Box 77010
San Francisco, CA 94107

SHONEN JUMP Manga Edition
10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2
First printing, November 2007
Second printing, November 2007

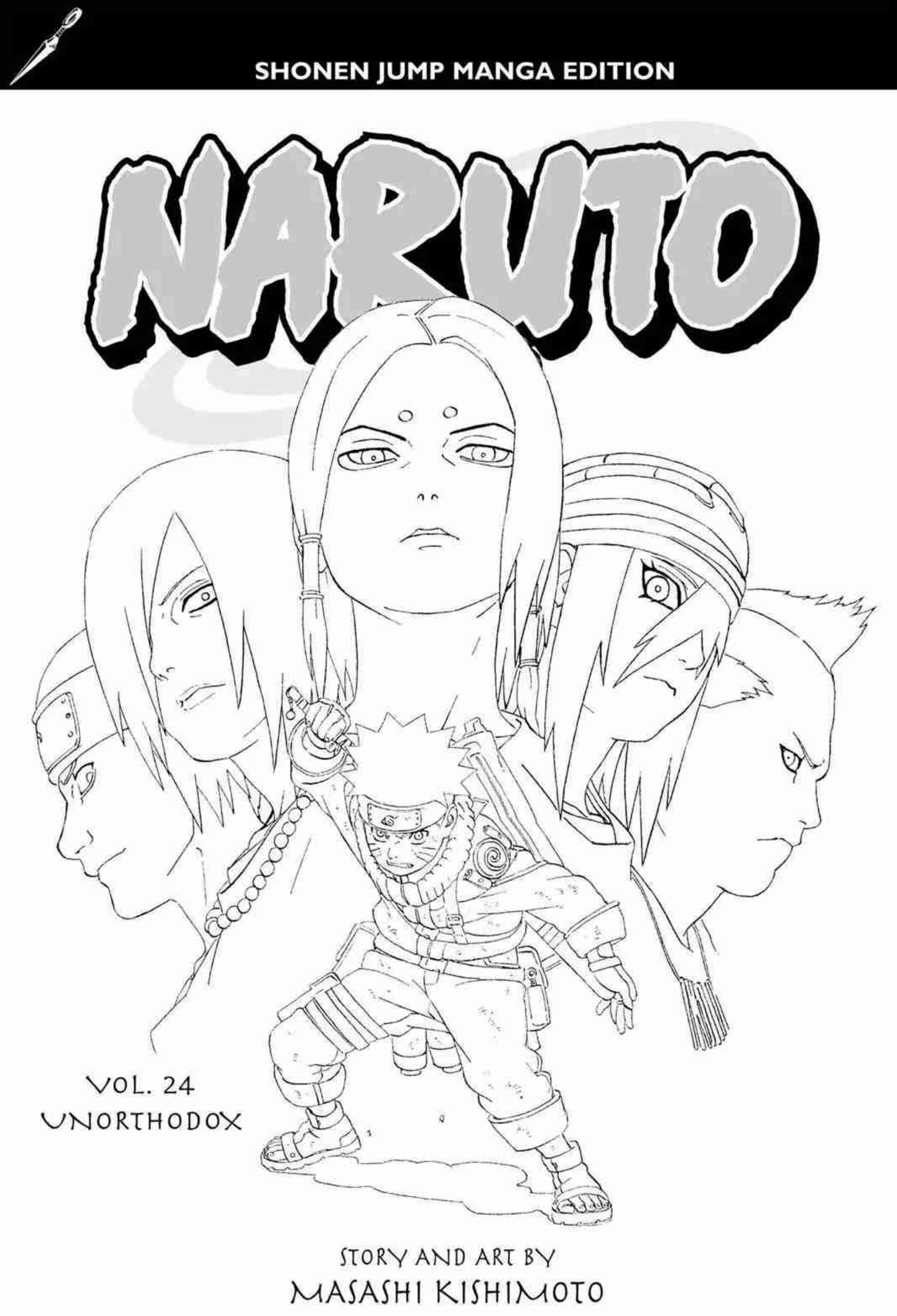
www.viz.com

PARENTAL ADVISORY
NARUTO is rated T for Teen and is recommended for ages 13 and up. This volume contains realistic and fantasy violence.

ratings.viz.com

SHONEN JUMP MANGA EDITION

NARUTO



VOL. 24
UNORTHODOX

STORY AND ART BY
MASASHI KISHIMOTO

CHARACTERS

Sasuke
サスケ

Naruto
ナルト

Sakura
サクラ

The Sound Ninja Four
音の四人衆

The Story So Far...

Naruto was once the bane of the Konohagakure Ninja Academy. Despite the rough start, he and his friends Sasuke and Sakura successfully join the ranks of the ninja. But during the final tournament of the Third Chunin Exam, the nefarious Orochimaru launches *Operation Destroy Konoha*, during which the Third Hokage sacrifices his own life.

In the aftermath, Tsunade steps up to become the Fifth Hokage. Charmed by the power of Orochimaru, Sasuke joins up with the Sound Ninja Four. During a battle with the Sound Four, Choji and Neji both fall, but Naruto, Shikamaru and Kiba are still standing...

NARUTO

VOL. 24
UNORTHODOX

CONTENTS

NUMBER 209: HELP ARRIVES!! 7

NUMBER 210: LEE'S SECRET!! 27

NUMBER 211: UNORTHODOX...!! 47

NUMBER 212: DANGER DANGER DANGER!! 67

NUMBER 213: DEBT...!! 87

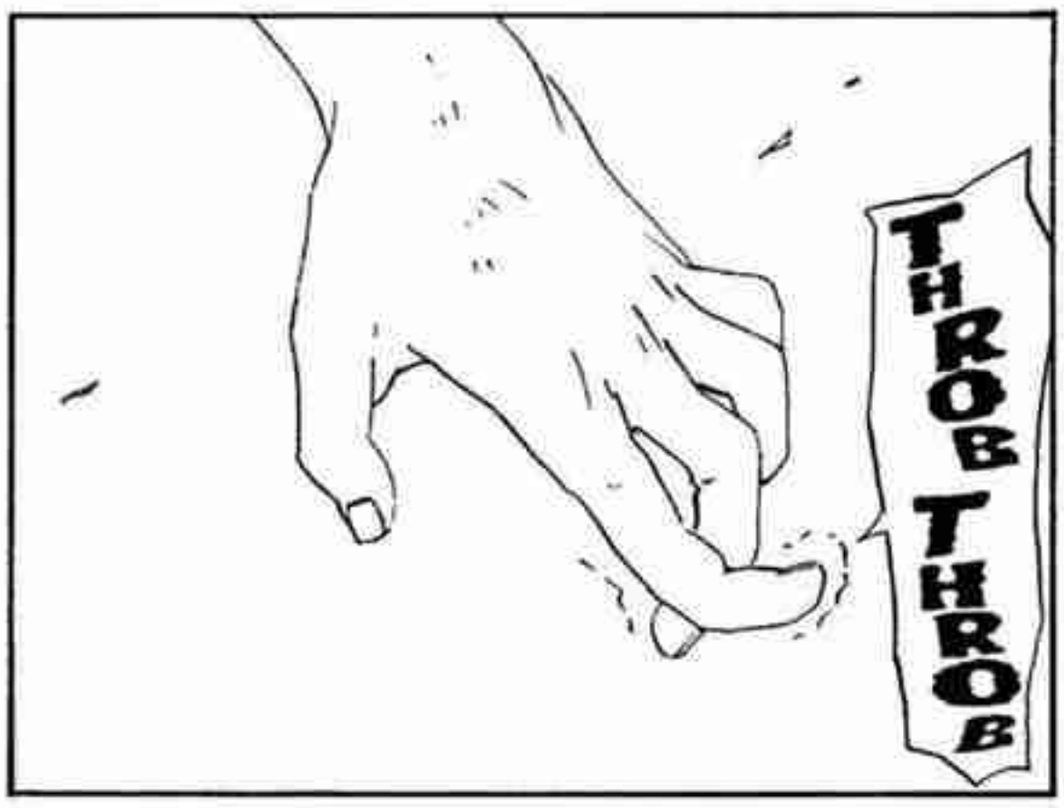
NUMBER 214: RETREAT...!! 109

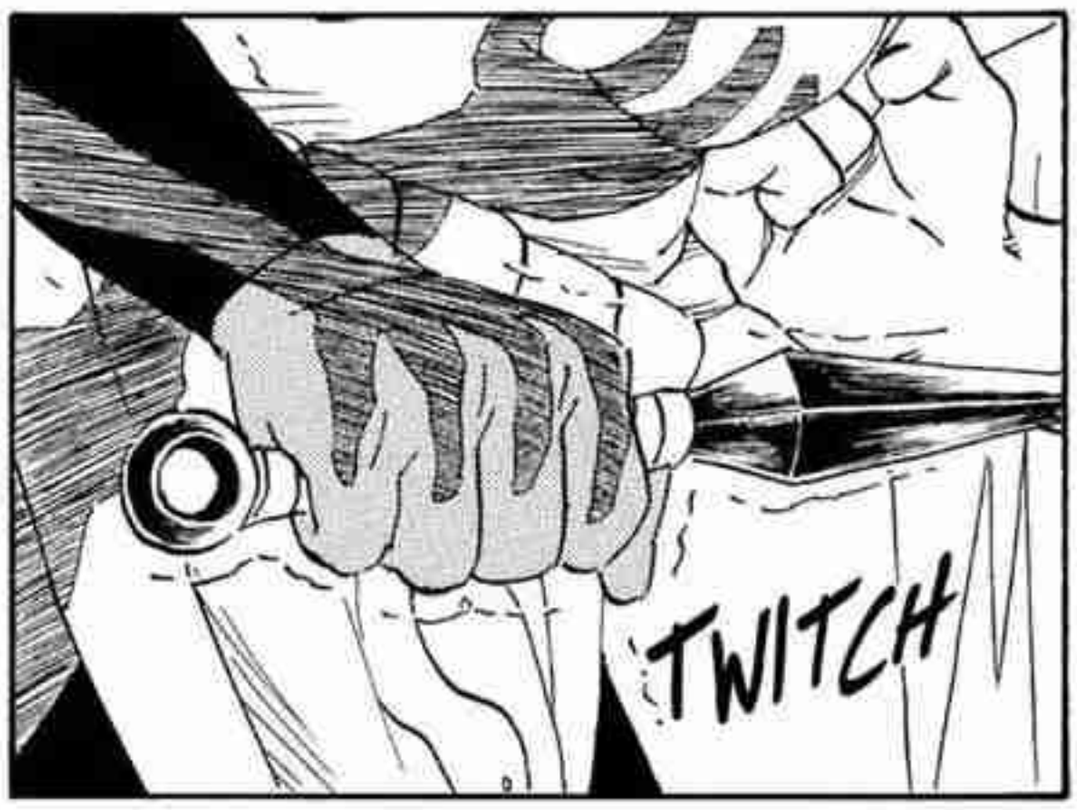
NUMBER 215: GAARA OF THE SAND 129

NUMBER 216: HALBERD AND SHIELD...!! 149

NUMBER 217: FOR THE MOST PRECIOUS 169

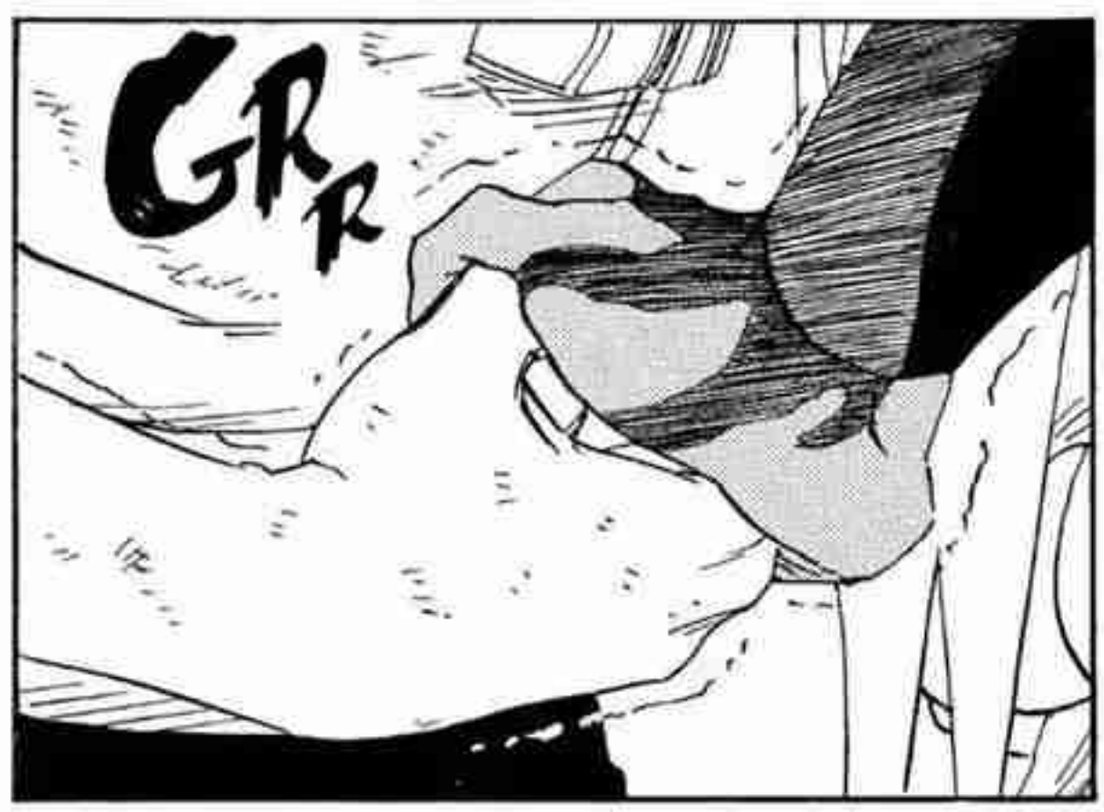
Number 209: Help Arrives!!


THROB THROB


TWITCH

YOU MAY BE STUPID... BUT YOU'RE BRAVE.
HMPH... I GOTTA GIVE IT TO YOU...

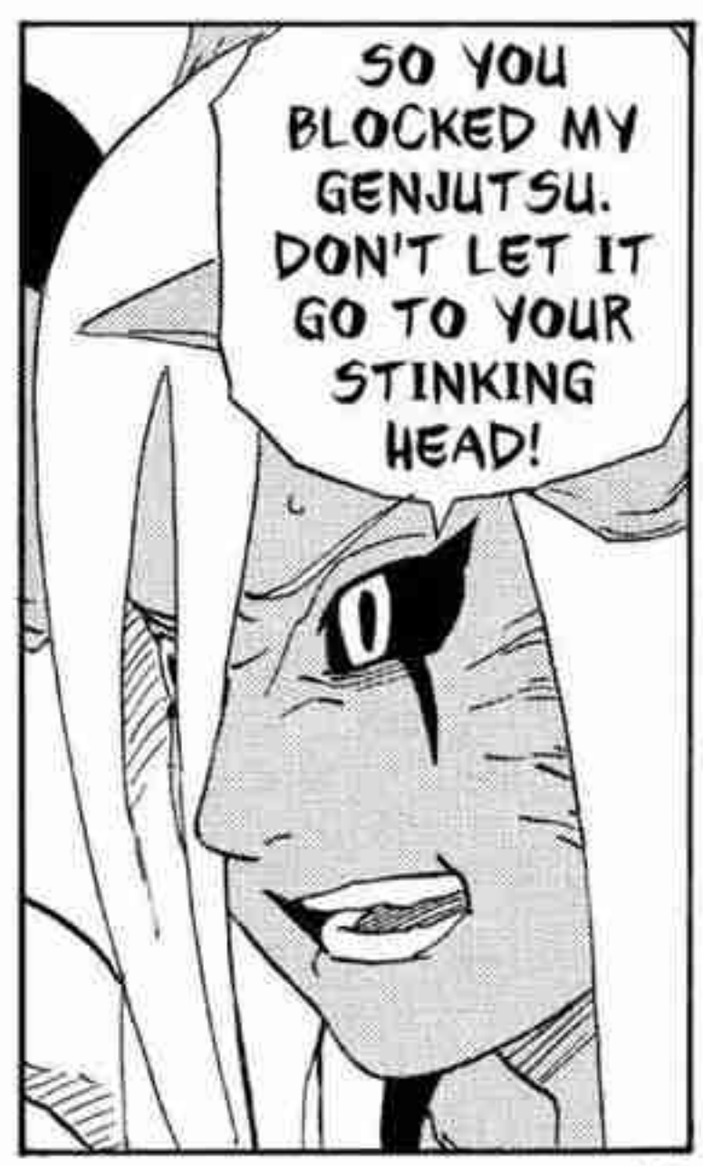
READ THIS WAY
AND I'M SUCH A NICE GUY.
...
SHF
THEN AGAIN, DO YOU REALLY FIT THE DEFINITION...? NAH, GUESS NOT.
SEE, IT'S AGAINST MY CODE TO STRIKE A LADY.
WS
SH


GRR

!!

BUT I AM NOT LOSING THIS...
SKKT
RRG

NUTS...
I CAN'T SUBDUE HER COMPLETELY. NOT JUST YET.


SO YOU BLOCKED MY GENJUTSU. DON'T LET IT GO TO YOUR STINKING HEAD!

READ THIS WAY
ALMOST THERE...
UGH ...
...!
GRR
SKUNG
GWUR GWUR GWUR
?!
ZWUURR
ZWUURR

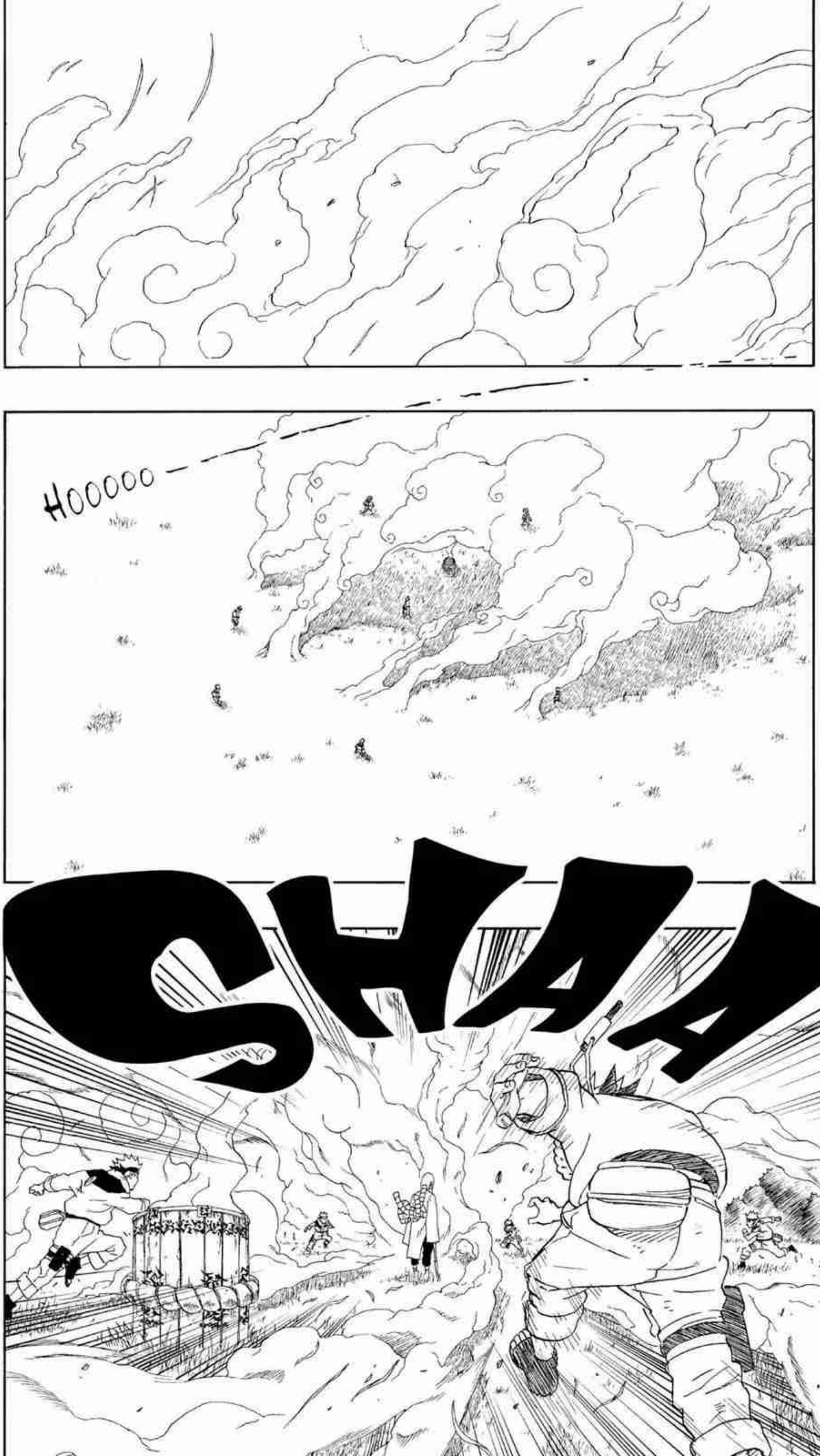
GRRR
ZWURR
ZWURRR
BUT IF I LET GO, I'M DEAD.
THIS SHADOW PARALYSIS EATS UP WAY TOO MUCH CHAKRA.
MMF
CRAK
...
I GOT HER THIS CLOSE, BUT STILL SHE KEEPS PUSHING BACK!
WHAT'S UP WITH HER CHAKRA...

I'VE GOTTA FINISH HER OFF.

WHAT

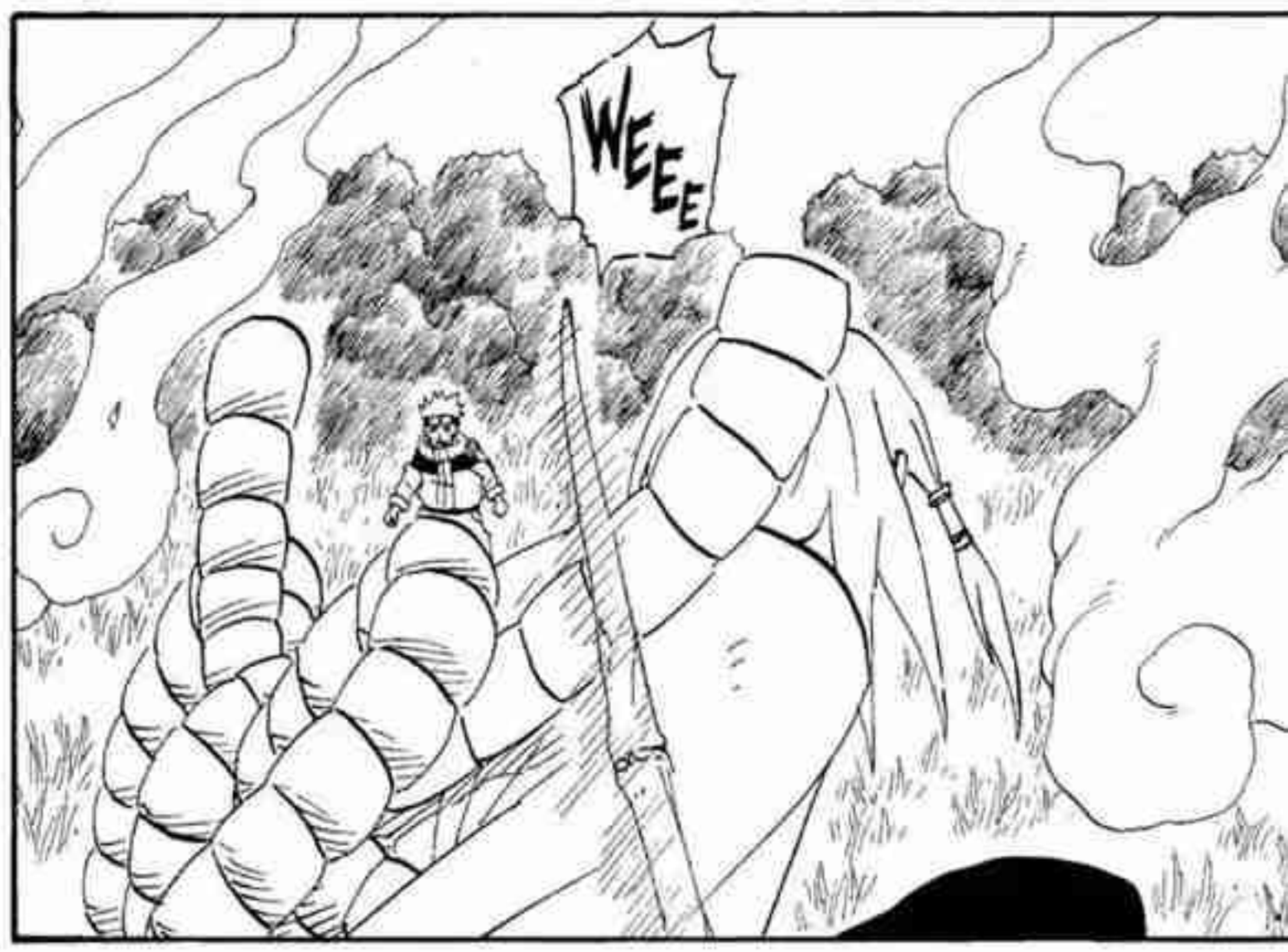
URK...

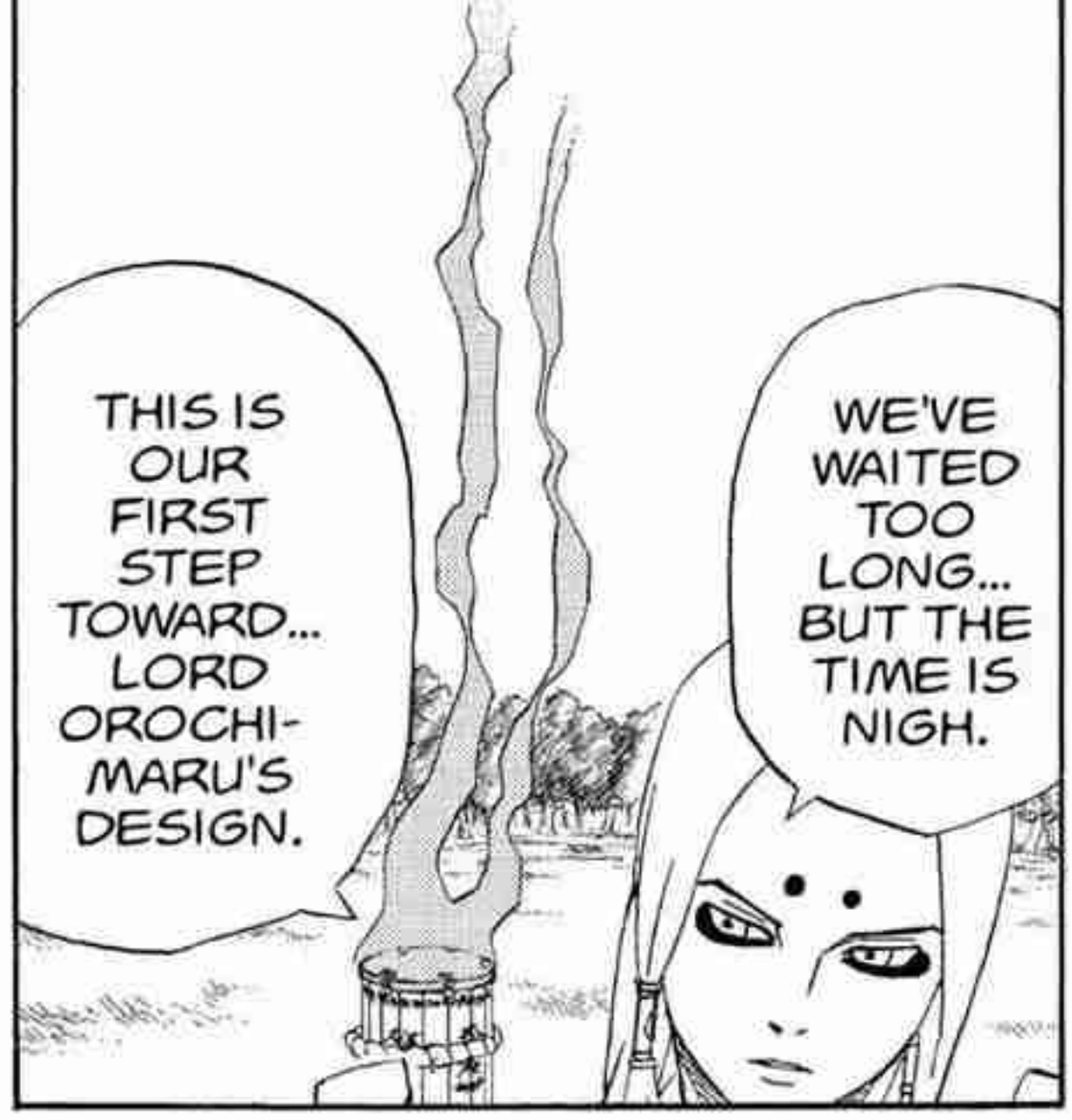
GRR... RRUH...

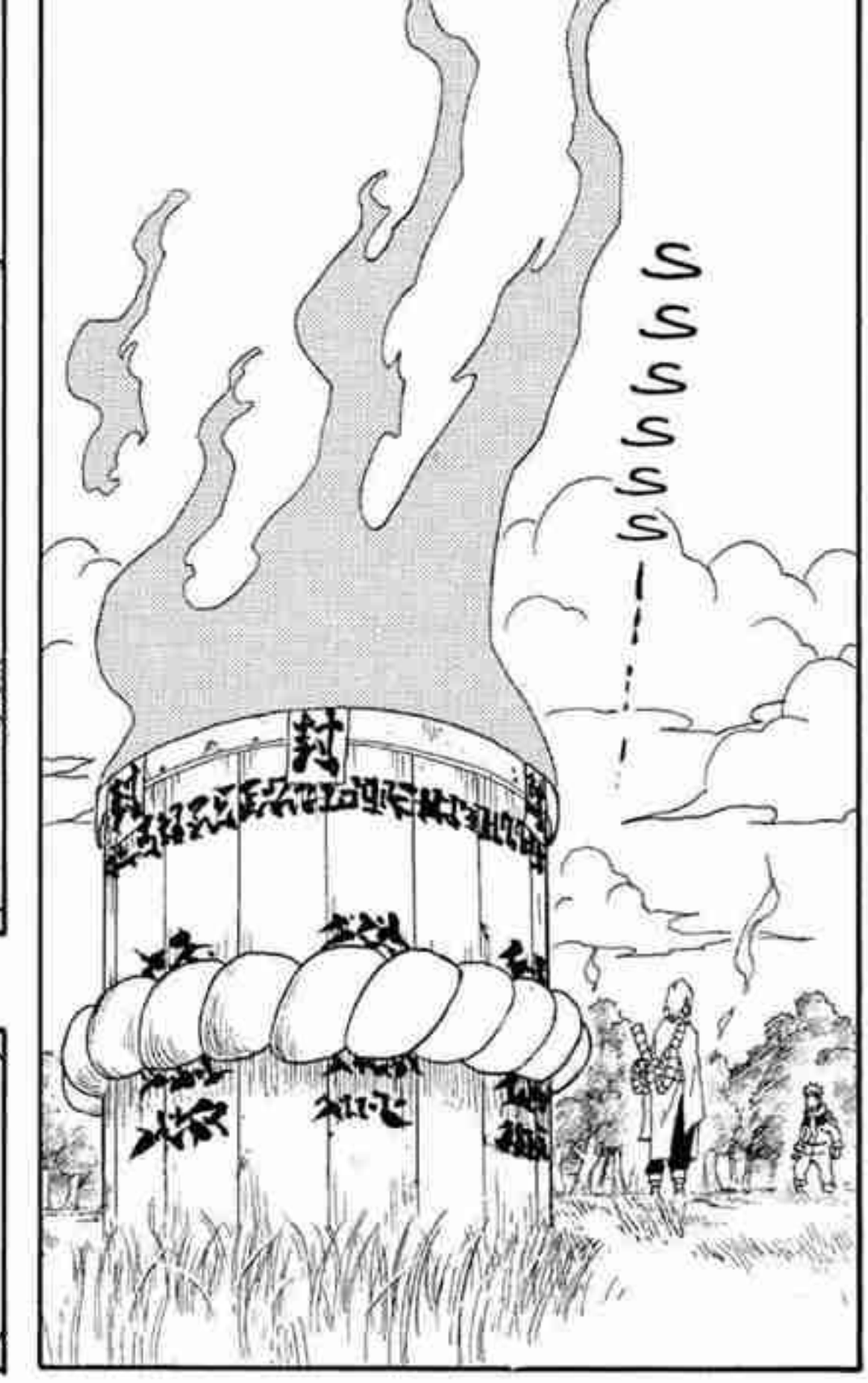

HOOOOO
SHAA

READ THIS WAY
WOOP
FWIW
WHOA!!!
SHOOM
!
TWIST

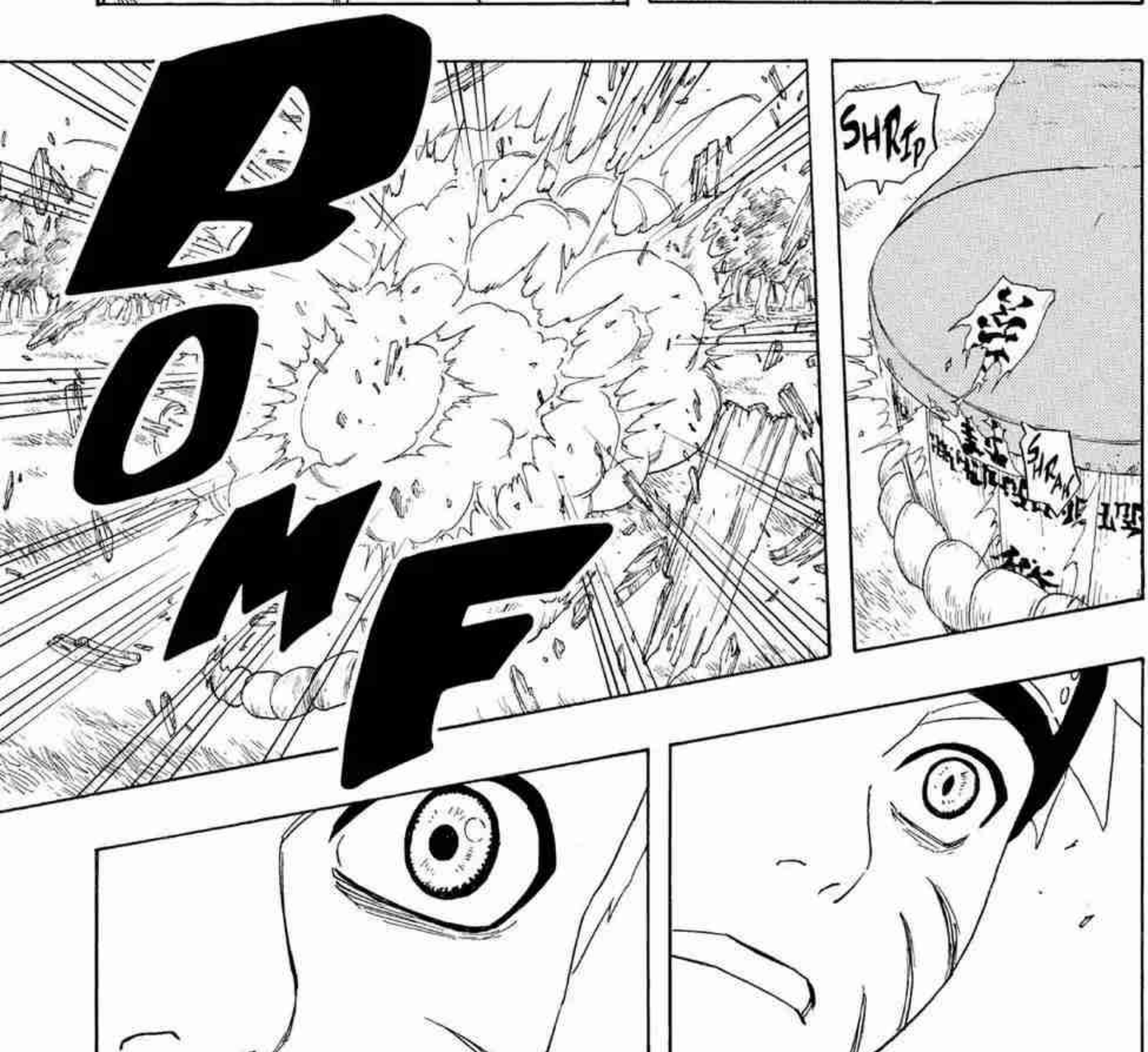
POOF POOF POOF POOF

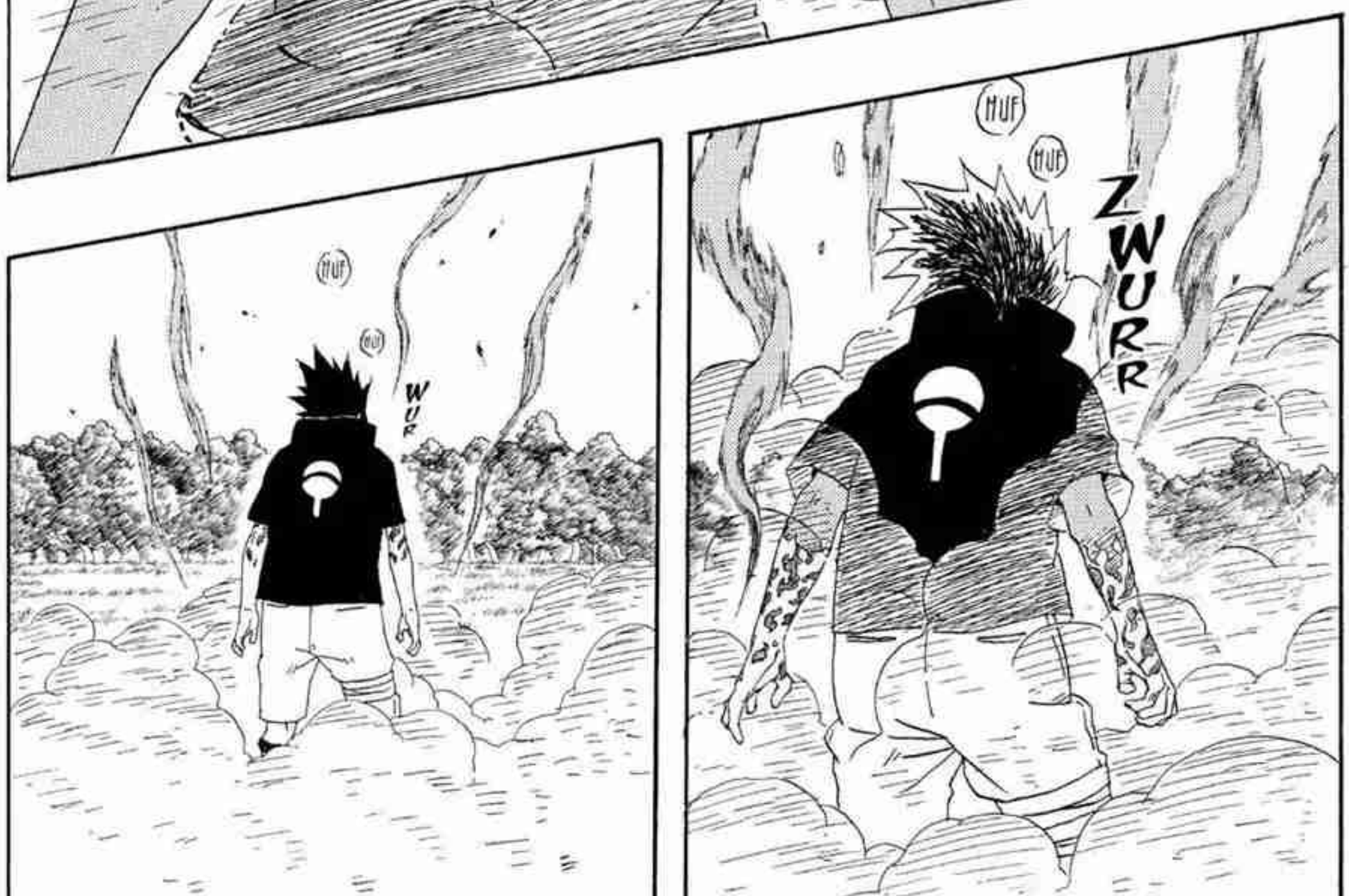



THIS IS OUR FIRST STEP TOWARD... LORD OROCHI-MARU'S DESIGN.
WE'VE WAITED TOO LONG... BUT THE TIME IS NIGH.


SSSSS---
封

...!!


BOMB
SHRIP
SHRAK


MUF
MUF
ZWURR
MUF
MUF
WUR

...?!

...

...
SASUKE...

?!
HEH... HEH HEH...

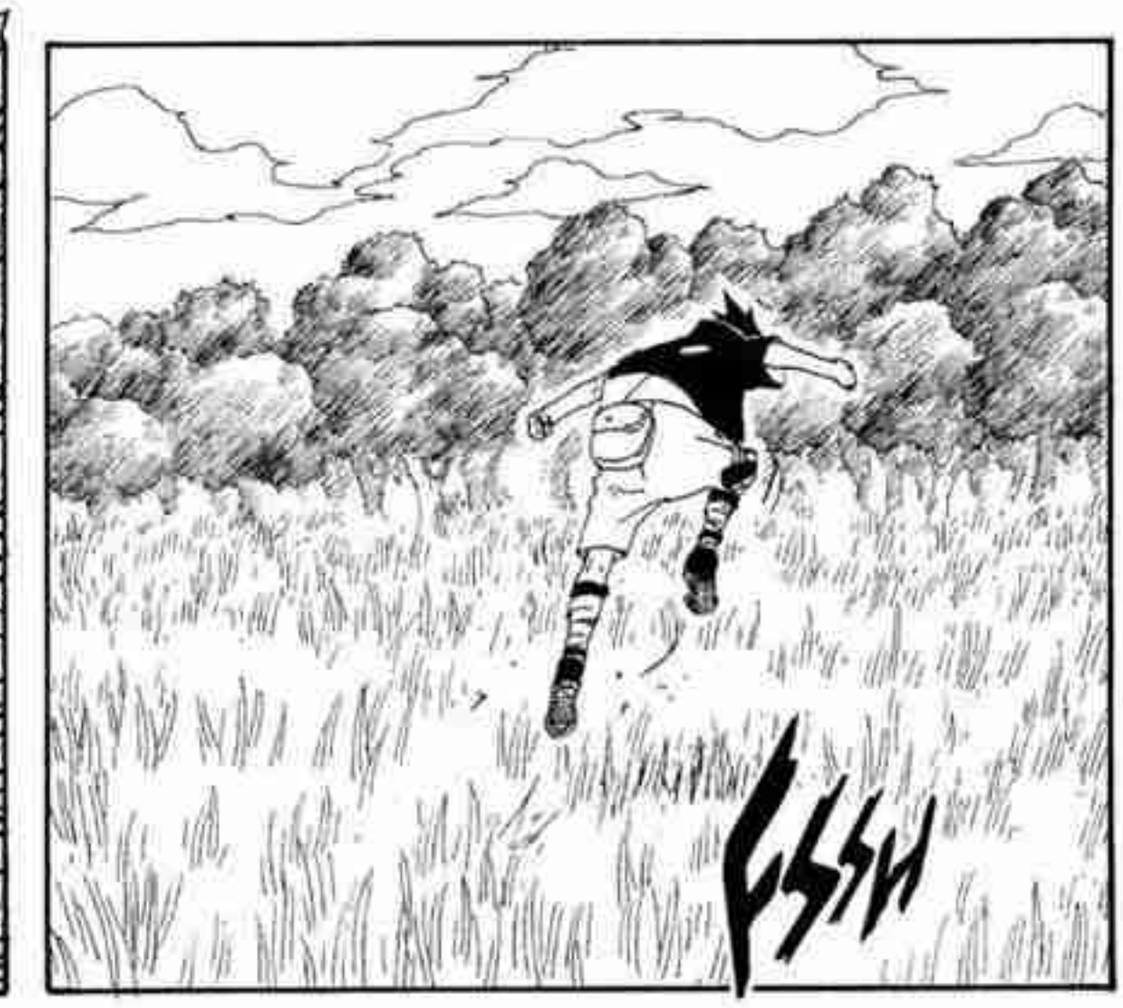
COME ON! LET'S GO!
SASUKE! WHAT ARE YOU DOIN' HERE?!

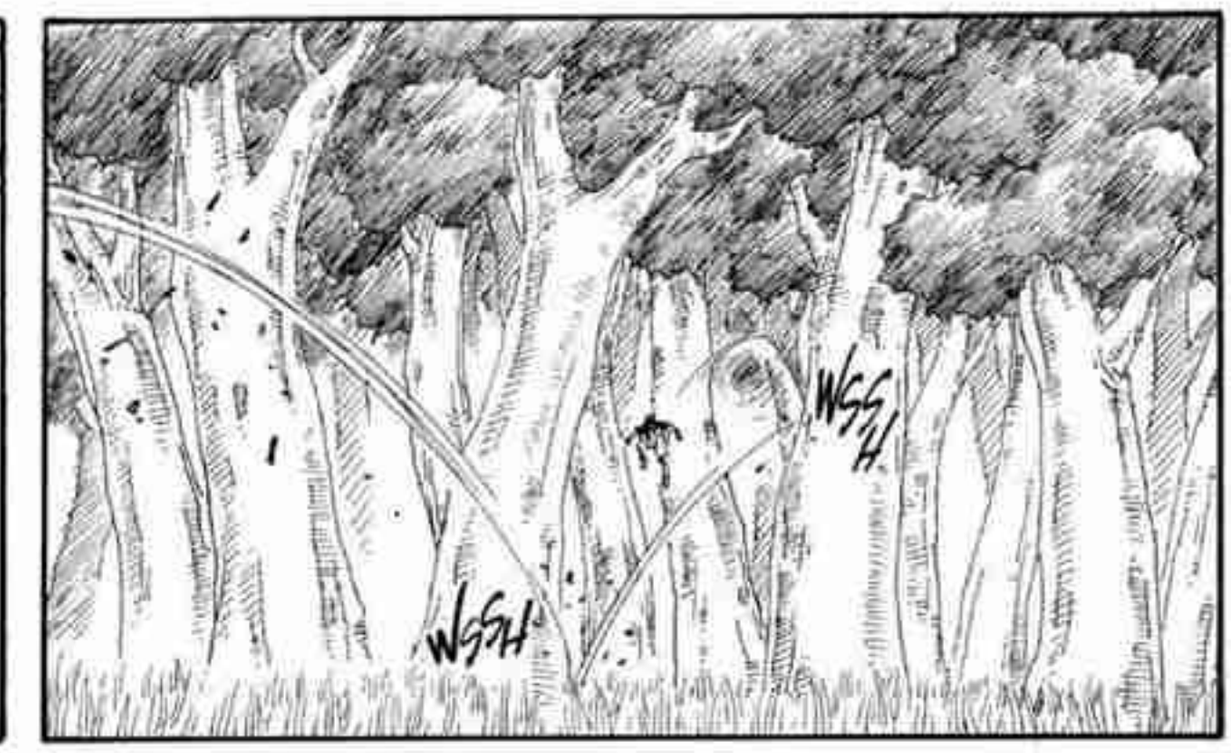
HEH...

HEH HEH...

I KNOW YOU CAN HEAR ME!!

READ THIS WAY
SASUKE! WAIT!!


PSSH


WSSH
WSSH

...IN DEATH.

WSSH
FORGET IT...
JOLT
?!

KONOHA SENPÛ! KONOHA HURRI-CANE!!!

FIP

WHO...?

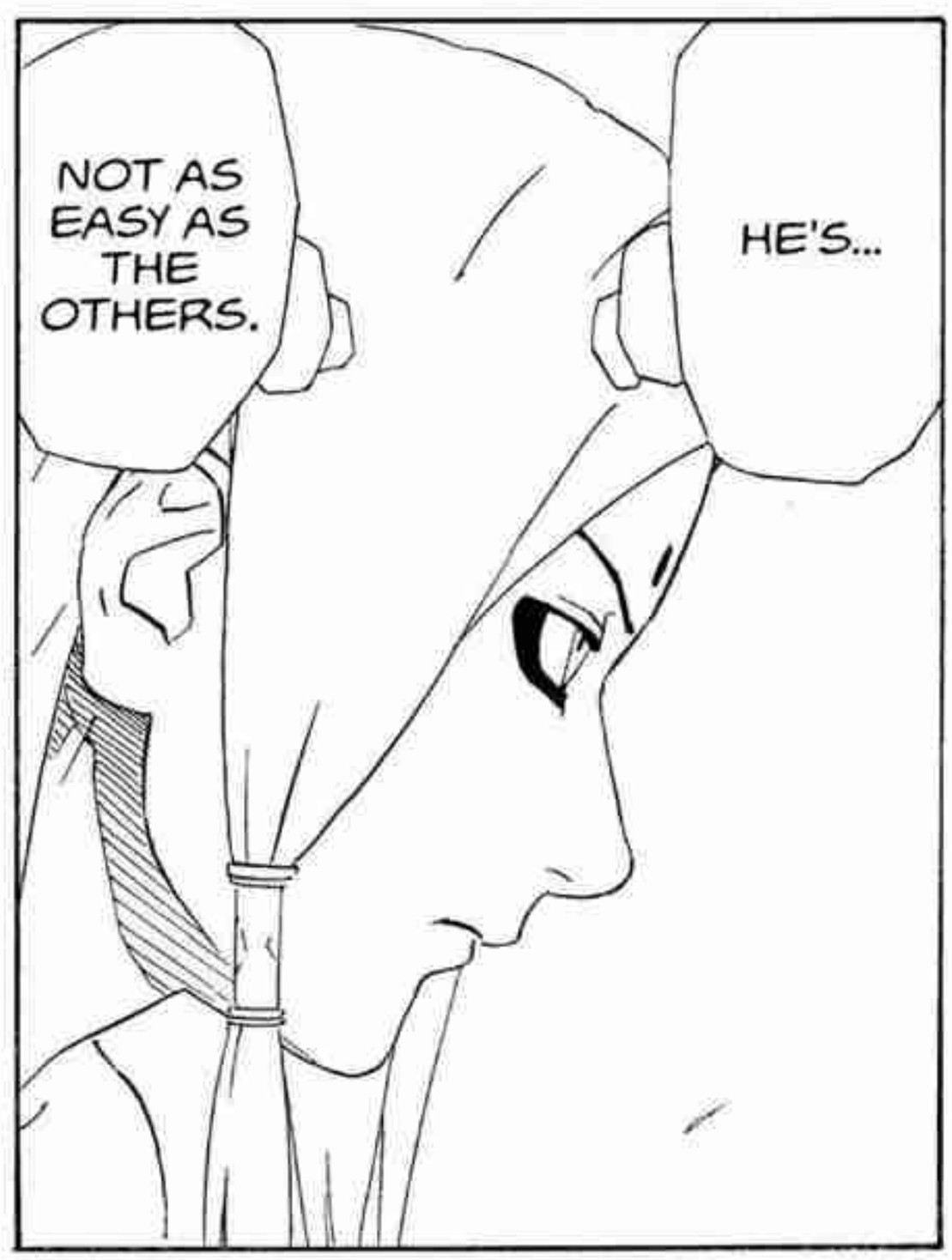
THE NAME'S ROCK LEE!
KONOHA'S HANDSOME BLUE BEAST IS BACK...

BUSHY BROWS ...!

...

KWAH- !!

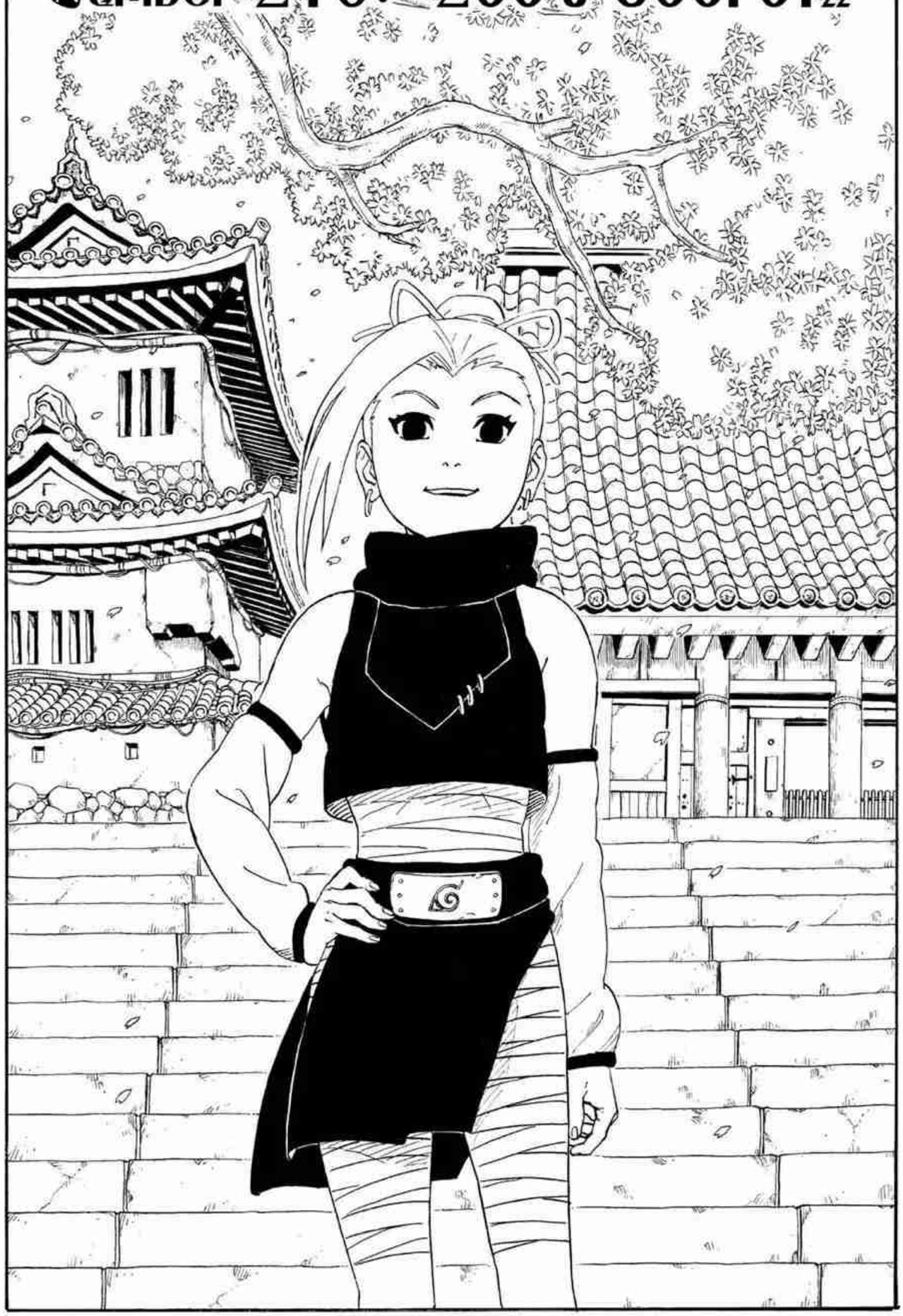
NARUTO! I'LL HANDLE IT! JUST GET TO SASUKE!
HOW'S IT YOU'RE...
I THOUGHT ...


NOT AS EASY AS THE OTHERS.
HE'S...

LEAVE THIS GUY TO ME!

NARUTO
TM

Number 210: Lee's Secret!!



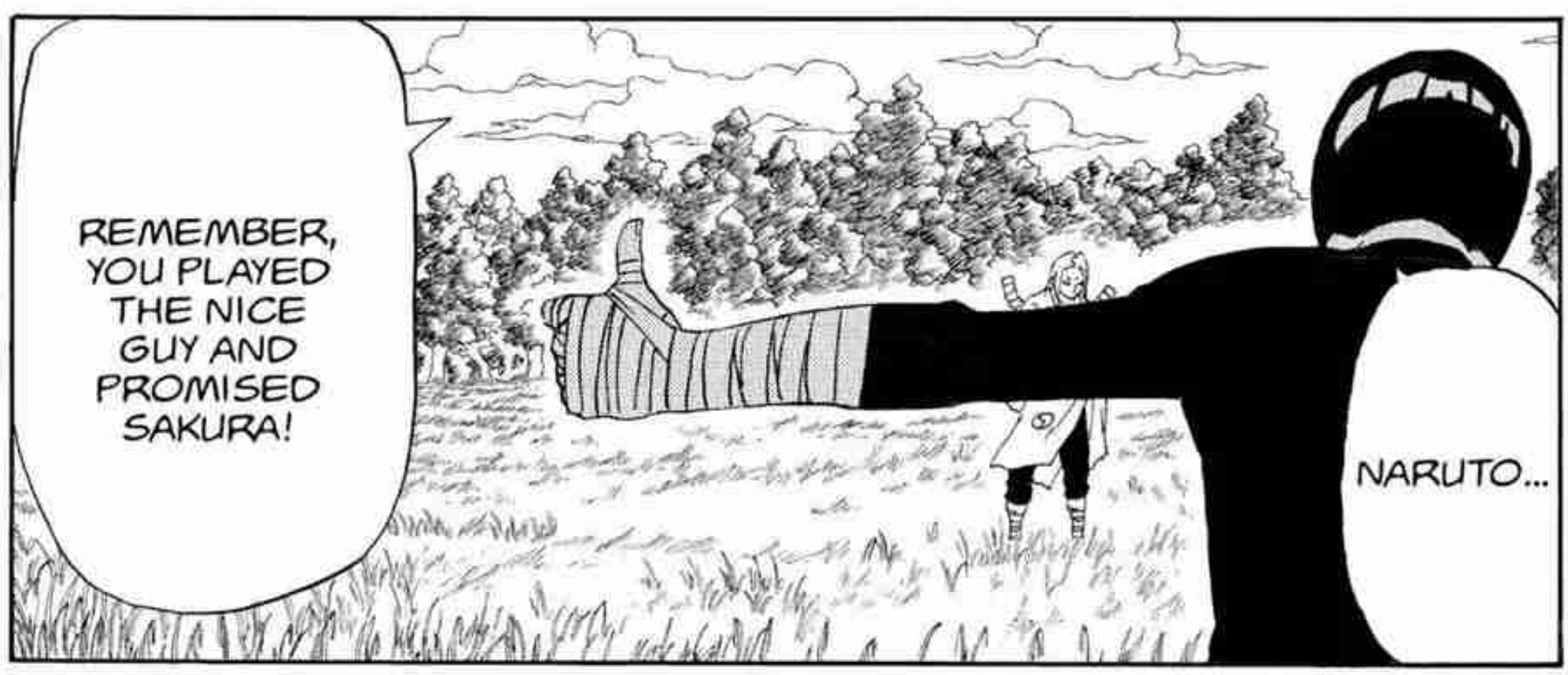
HOOOOO

SH INNG

!
WHAT ARE YOU DOING?! GO! NOW!!
WIP

HE'S SUPER STRONG.

...


REMEMBER, YOU PLAYED THE NICE GUY AND PROMISED SAKURA!
NARUTO...

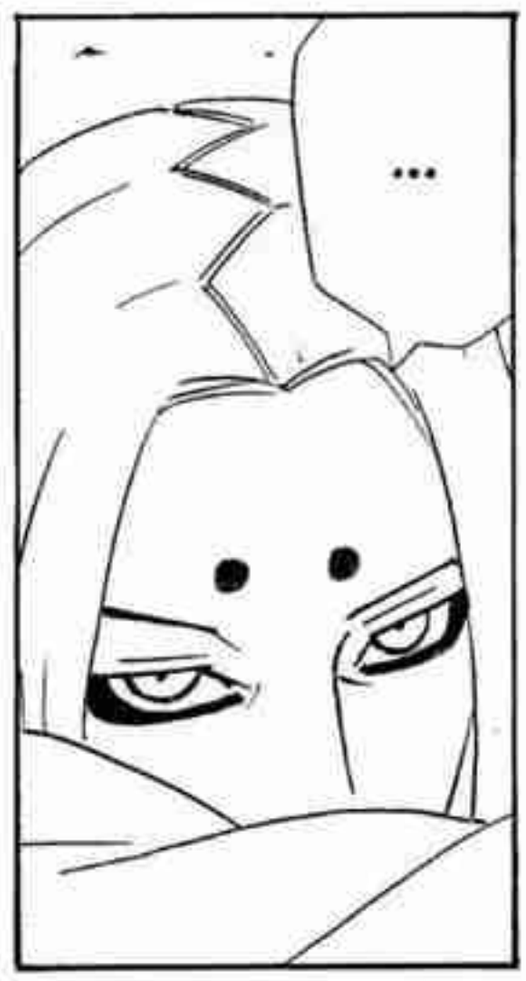
THAT'S MY PROMISE OF A LIFE-TIME!!
IT'S OKAY. I'LL BRING BACK SASUKE FOR SURE!

...

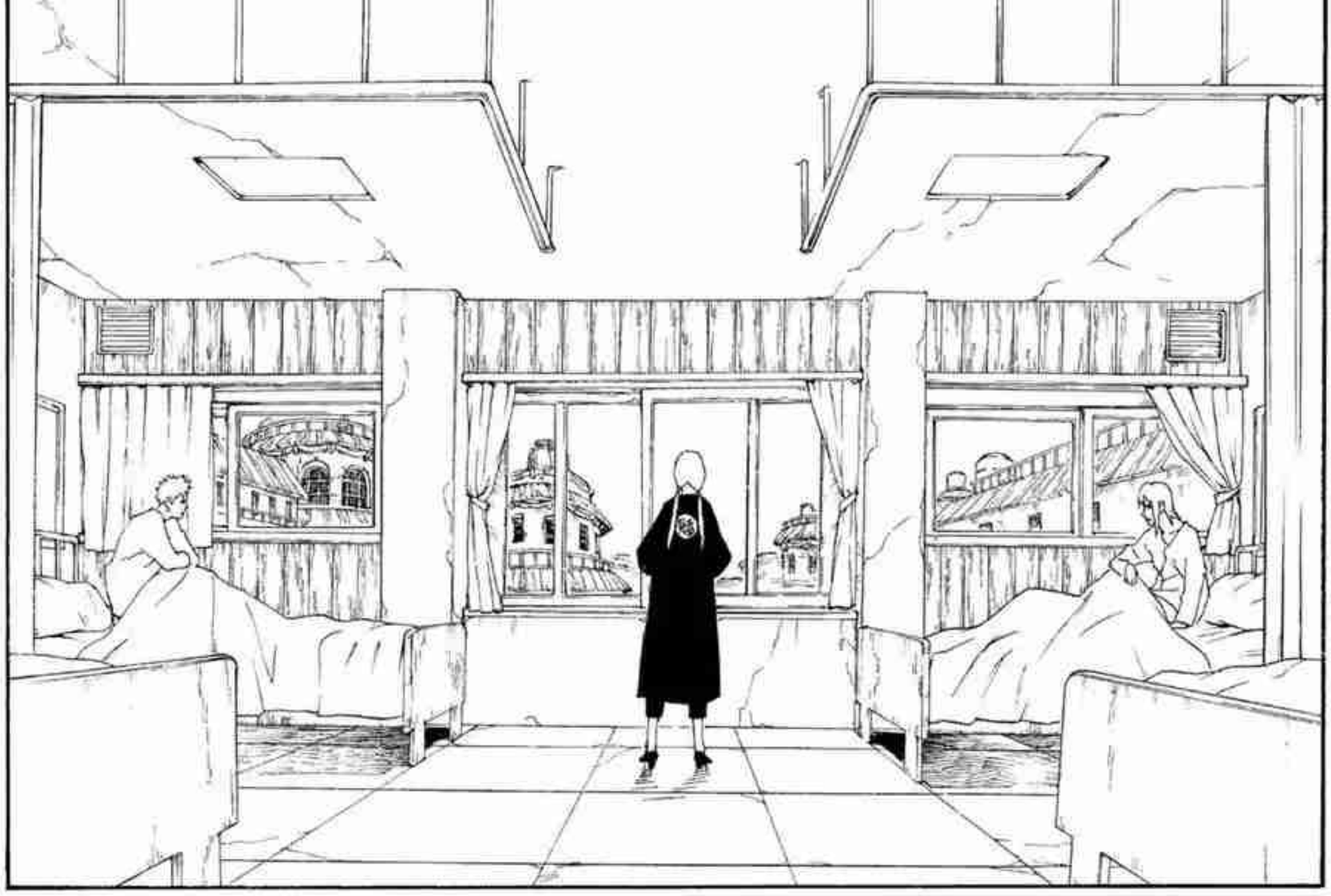
WUP

THAT'S MY PROMISE!!

I'LL BEAT THIS GUY!



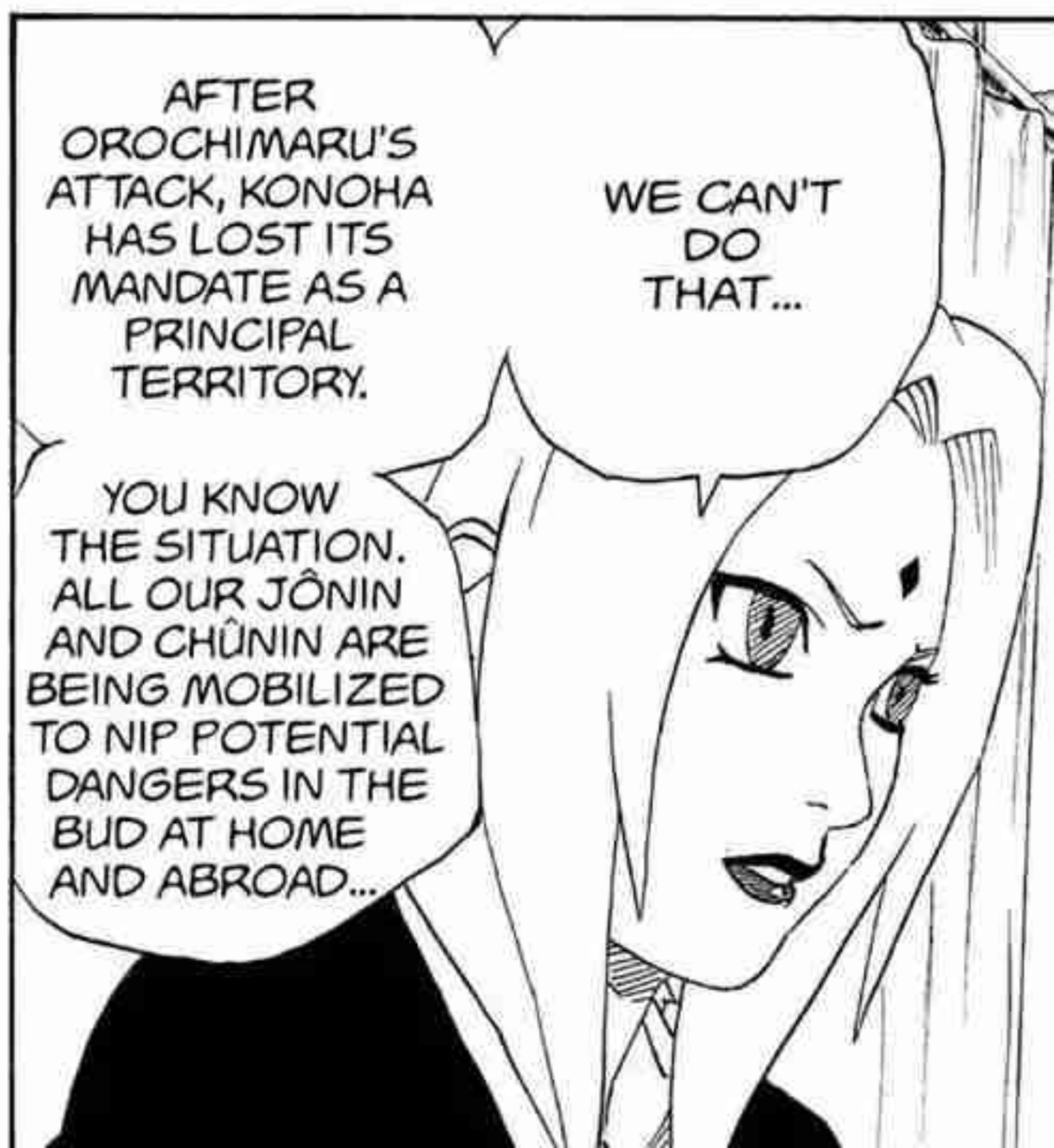
FSS



WE SHOULD THROW TOGETHER A TEAM OF JÔNIN AND SEND THEM IN AS BACKUP...
I MEAN, GRANTED, WE WERE COMING OFF A MISSION, AND OUT OF CHAKRA...
BUT LOOK WHAT HAPPENED TO US JÔNIN.

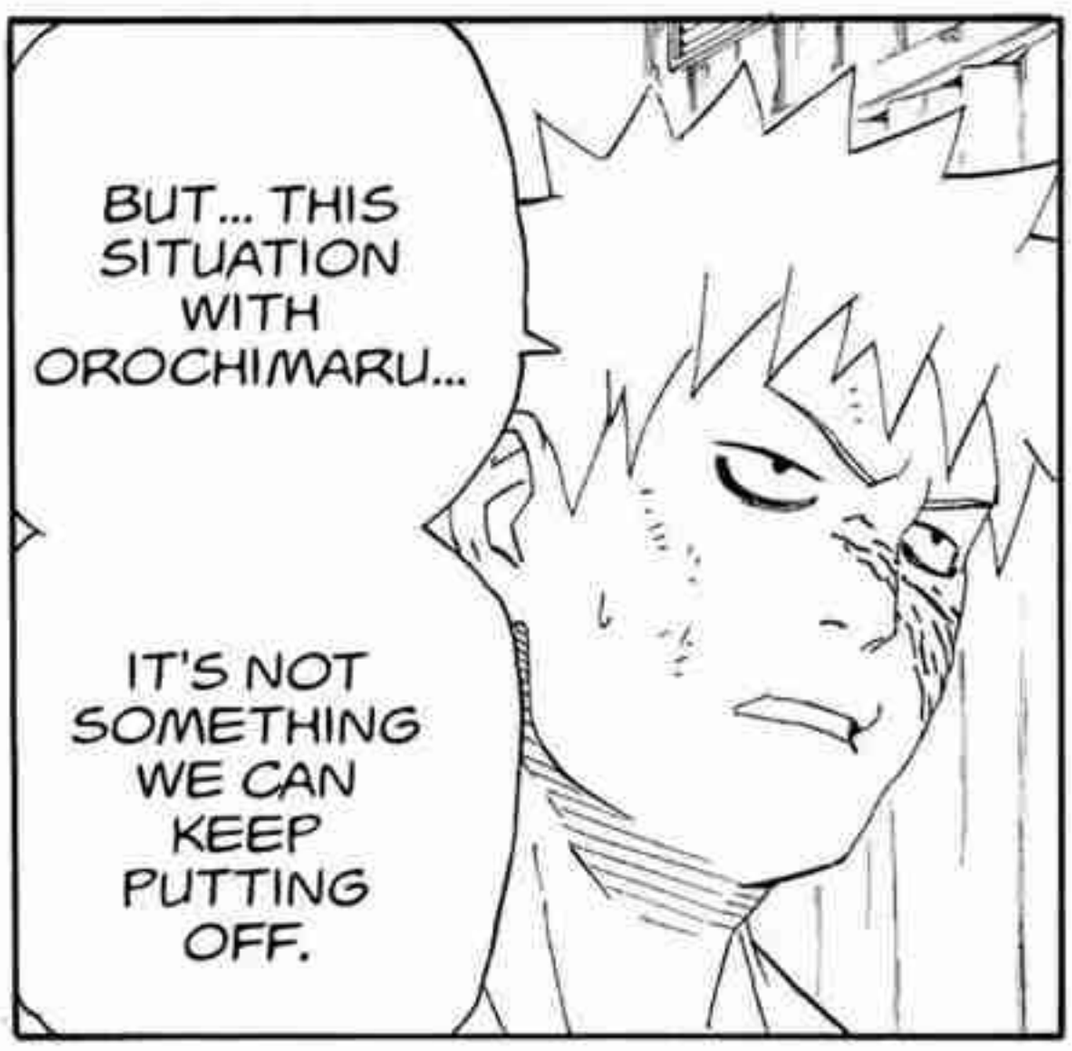
AGAINST FOES LIKE THAT... A HANDFUL OF GENIN WON'T DO.
BUT MAN... IF IT WAS SASUKE INSIDE THAT CASKET...

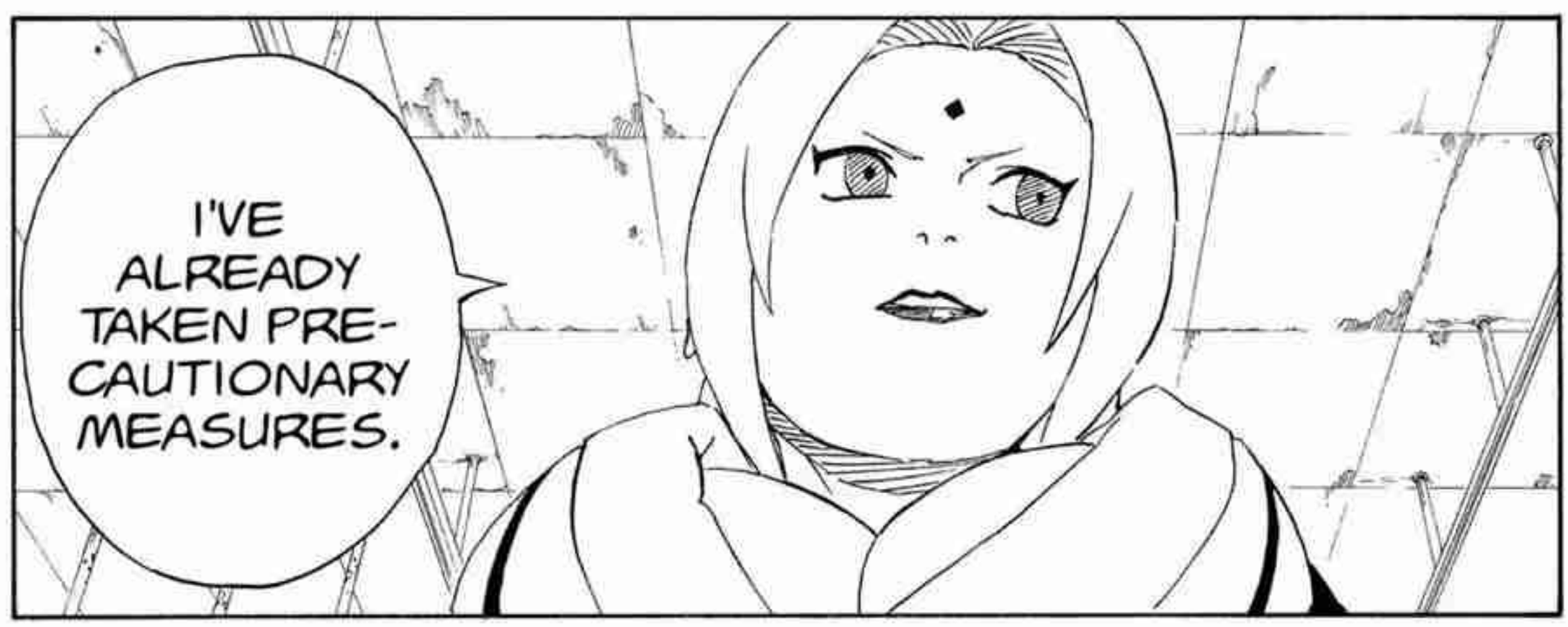
RIGHT NOW OUR PRIORITY IS AVOIDING WAR WITH THE OTHER NATIONS.
EVEN IF THE SHARINGAN WERE TO FALL INTO OROCHIMARU'S HANDS...


AFTER OROCHIMARU'S ATTACK, KONOHA HAS LOST ITS MANDATE AS A PRINCIPAL TERRITORY.
WE CAN'T DO THAT...
YOU KNOW THE SITUATION. ALL OUR JÔNIN AND CHÛNIN ARE BEING MOBILIZED TO NIP POTENTIAL DANGERS IN THE BUD AT HOME AND ABROAD...

READ
THIS
WAY

I KNOW... I'M NOT AS STUPID AS I LOOK.
HE'LL BE BACK AS SOON AS HE REGAINS HIS POWER...


BUT... THIS SITUATION WITH OROCHIMARU...
IT'S NOT SOMETHING WE CAN KEEP PUTTING OFF.


I'VE ALREADY TAKEN PRE-CAUTIONARY MEASURES.

THOP
!

THIS WAY.
HUF
FWIW
HUF
SHK

WHAT ABOUT LEE?! HOW IS HE?!! TELL ME!!

BUT NEVER MIND THAT!!

DID YOU SUCCEED?!

GUY?! WHAT HAPPENED TO YOU?

SHK

HUF

HUF

HUF

NO, I... I TOOK CARE OF IT, AND... RAN STRAIGHT BACK... IT WAS ALL I COULD DO!!

PAT

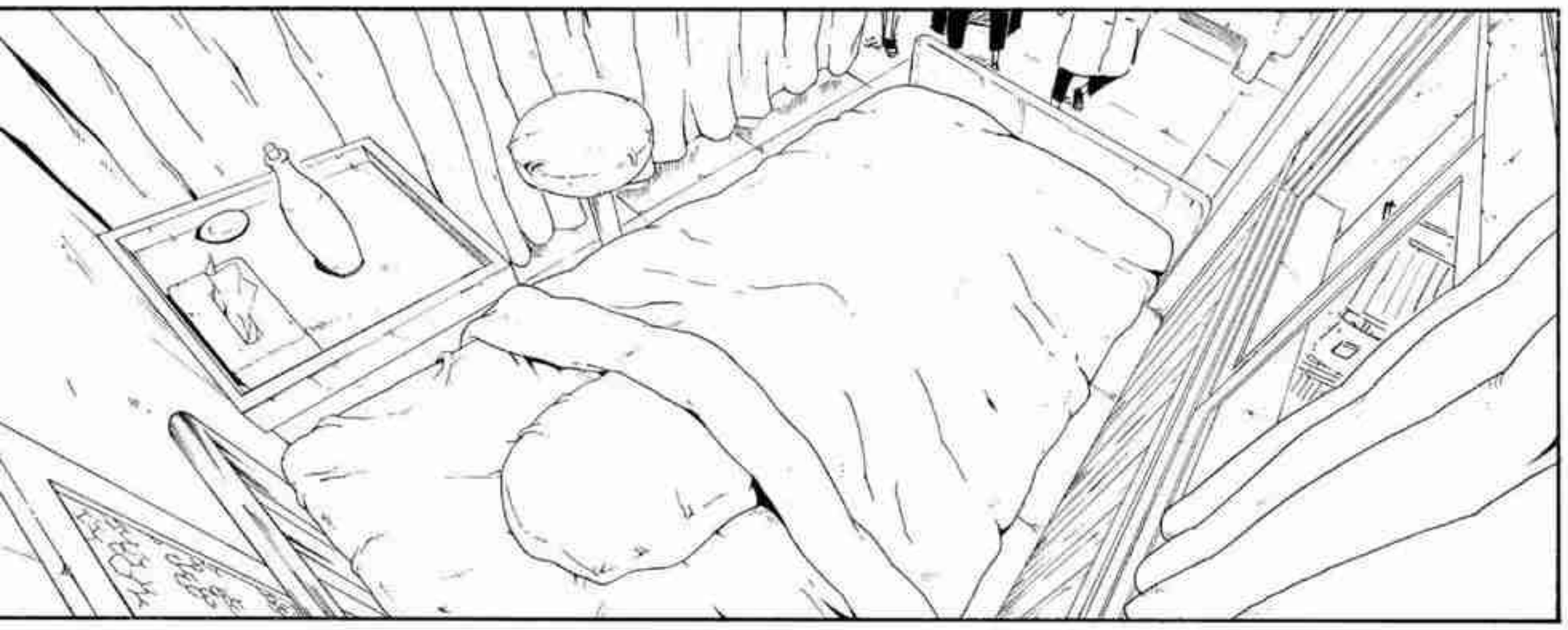
IF HE'S LIMITED TO JUTSU TRAINING, HE CAN START AS EARLY AS TOMORROW.

BUT IT WOULDN'T HURT TO TAKE IT EASY FOR A WHILE.

HIS SURGERY WAS A SUCCESS.

SKF
LADY TSUNADE!! WE'VE GOT A PROBLEM BACK HERE!! ROCK LEE IS MISSING!!

TAK TAK



LEE...
...

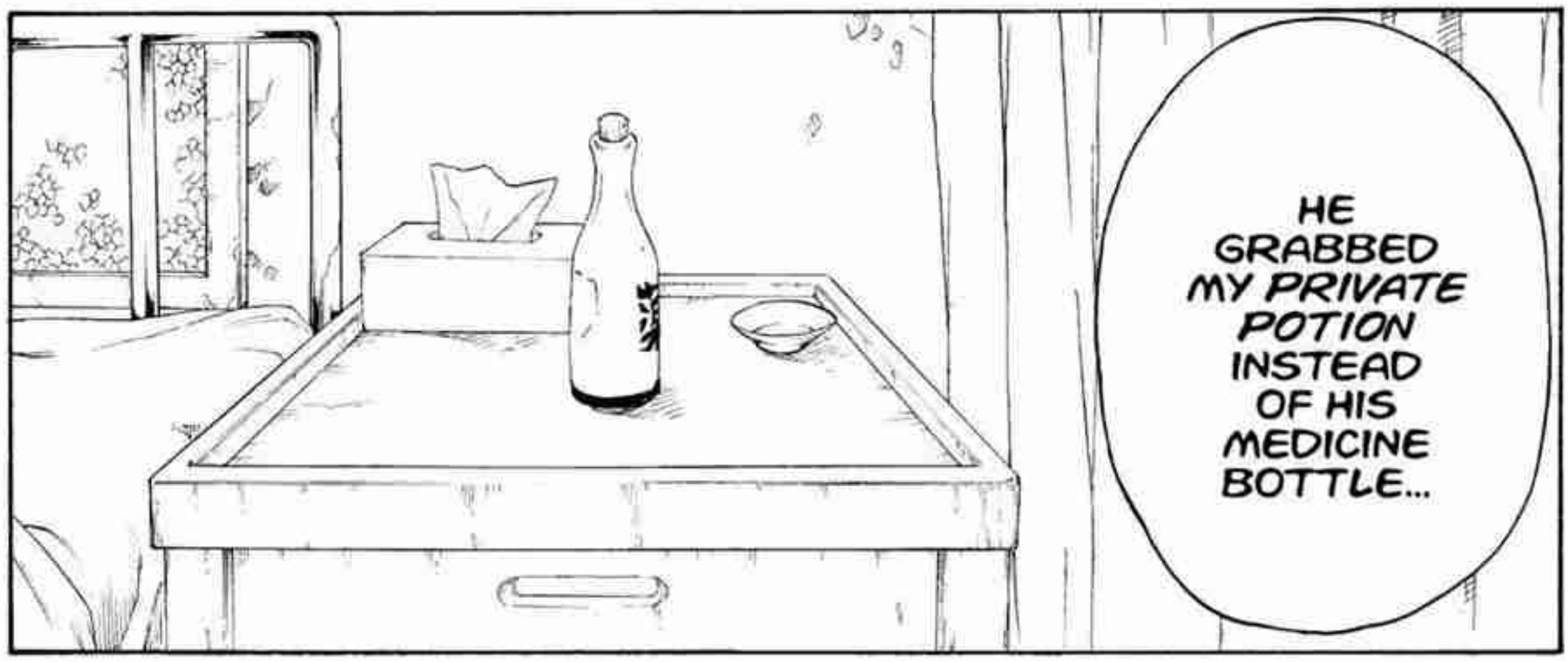
IT'S AMAZING. THIS WHOLE TIME YOU HARDLY LEFT HIS SIDE...
YET THE MOMENT WE TAKE OUR EYES OFF HIM, HE SLIPS AWAY.
OH DEAR... IT MUST HAVE BEEN LAST NIGHT, WHEN I WAS TREATING GENMA AND RAIDO...

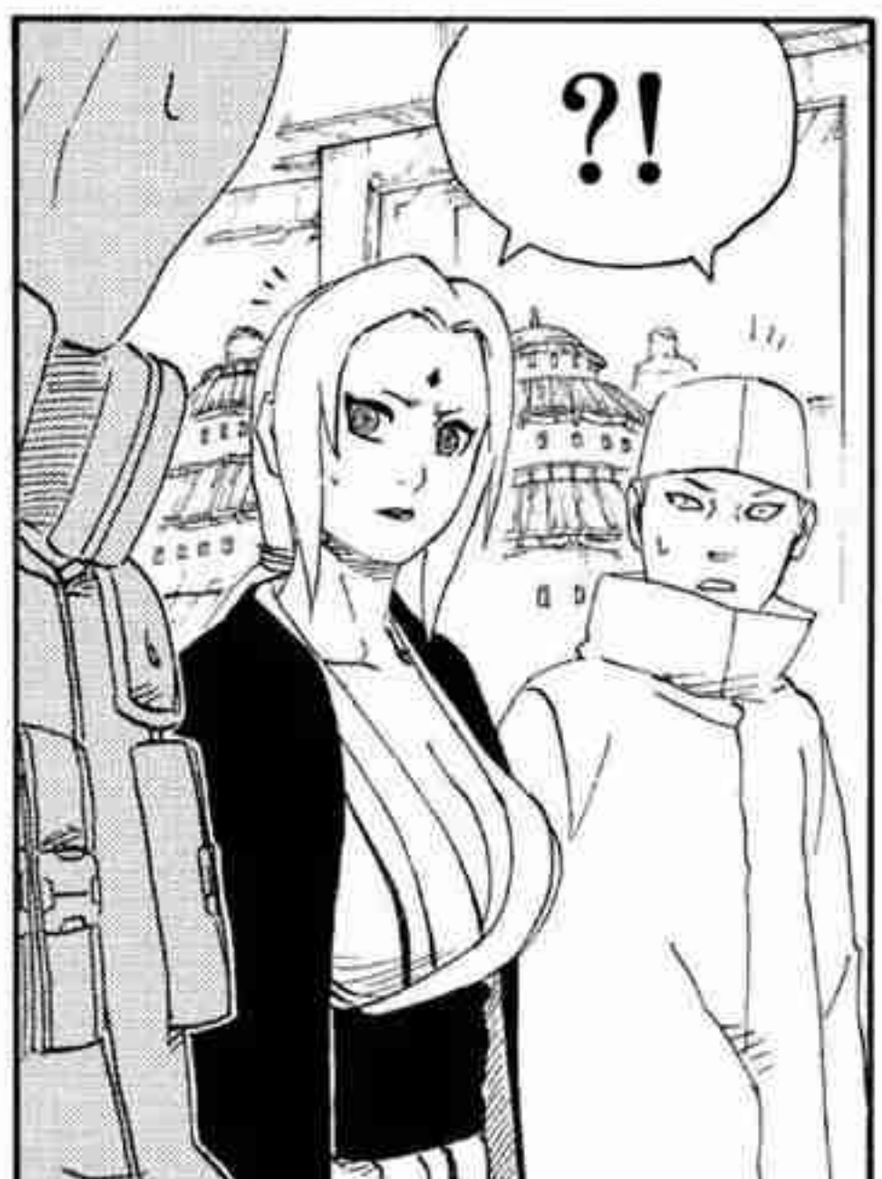
SEE WHAT KIND OF A HURRY HE WAS IN...

HAH...

HE'S GONE CHASING OFF AFTER THEM.

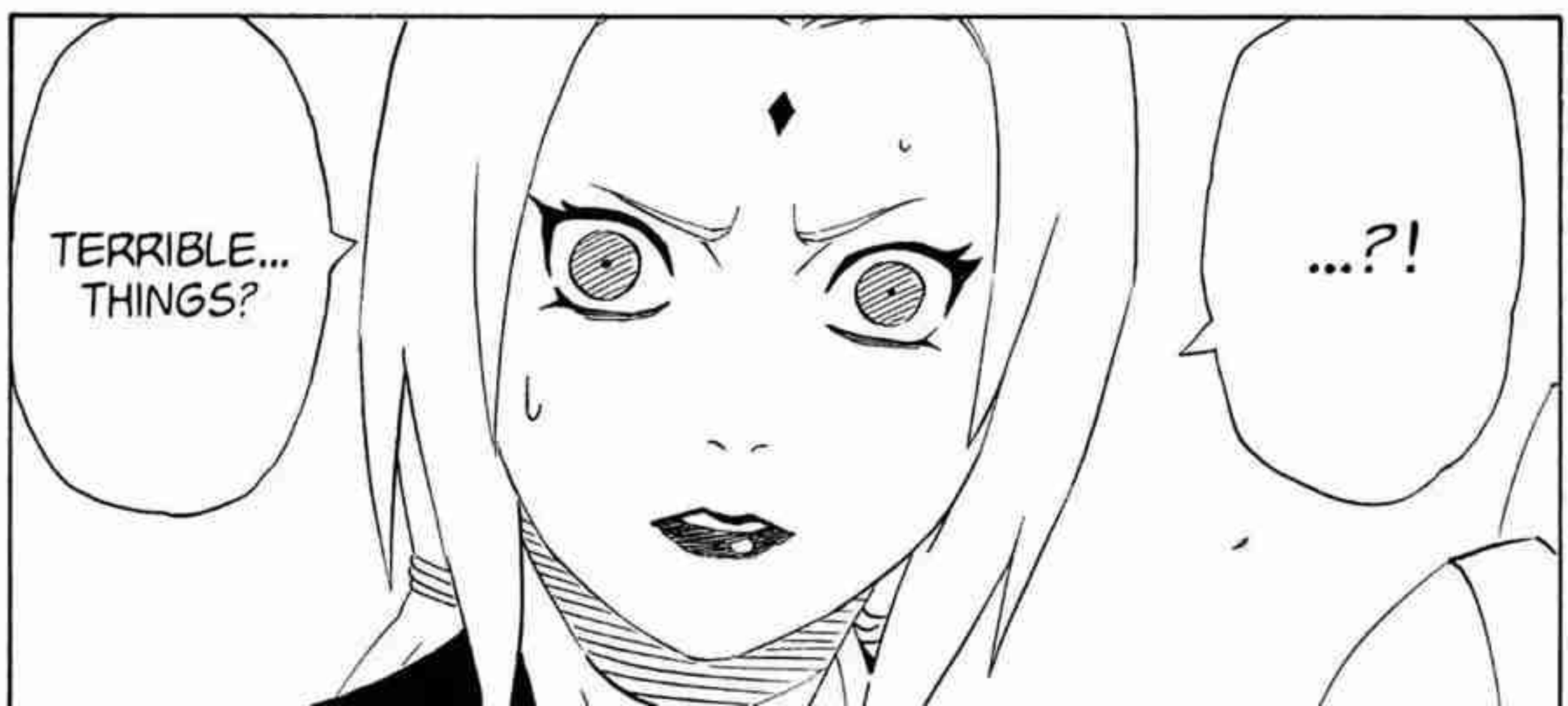
THAT FOOL...





IF HE DRINKS EVEN ONE DROP OF YOUR PRIVATE POTION...

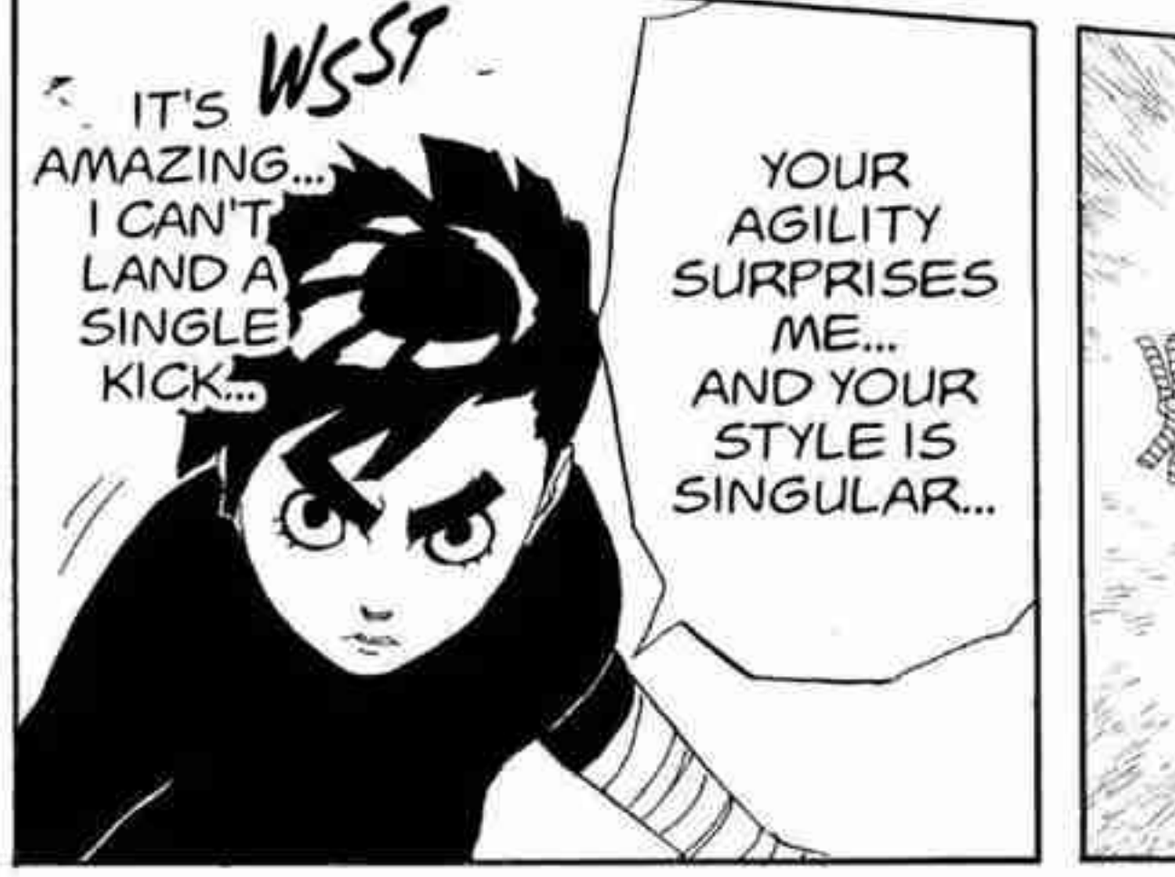
...TERRIBLE THINGS WILL HAPPEN!



WUP
KONOHA DAISENPÛ! KONOHA GREAT HURRICANE!!
WUP

FSSH
FIOOM
SKFF
WIP

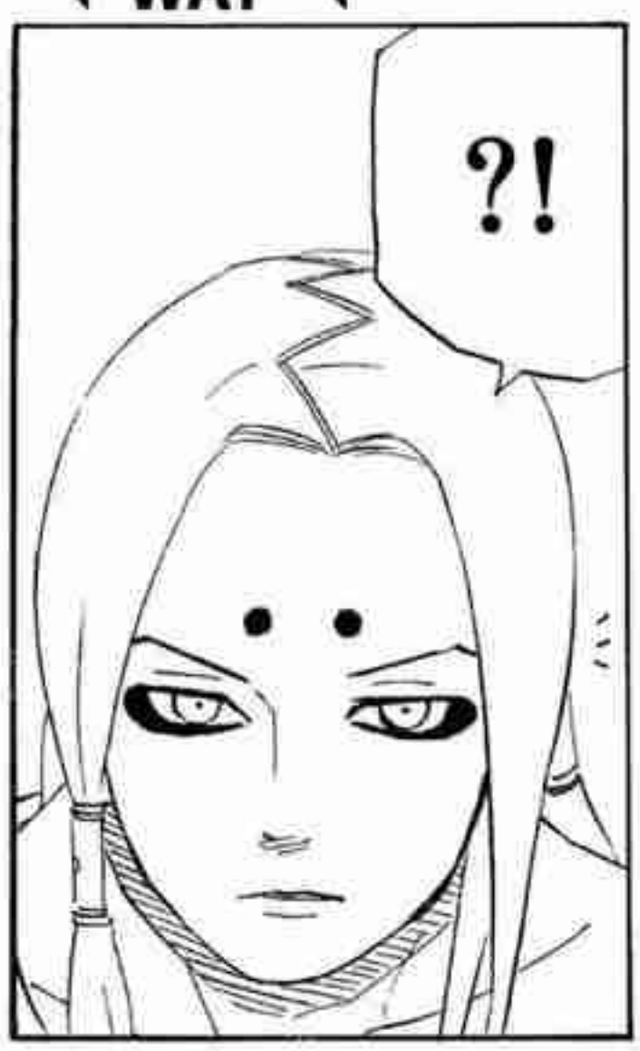
WSSS
WSD


IT'S AMAZING... I CAN'T LAND A SINGLE KICK...
WSST
YOUR AGILITY SURPRISES ME... AND YOUR STYLE IS SINGULAR...

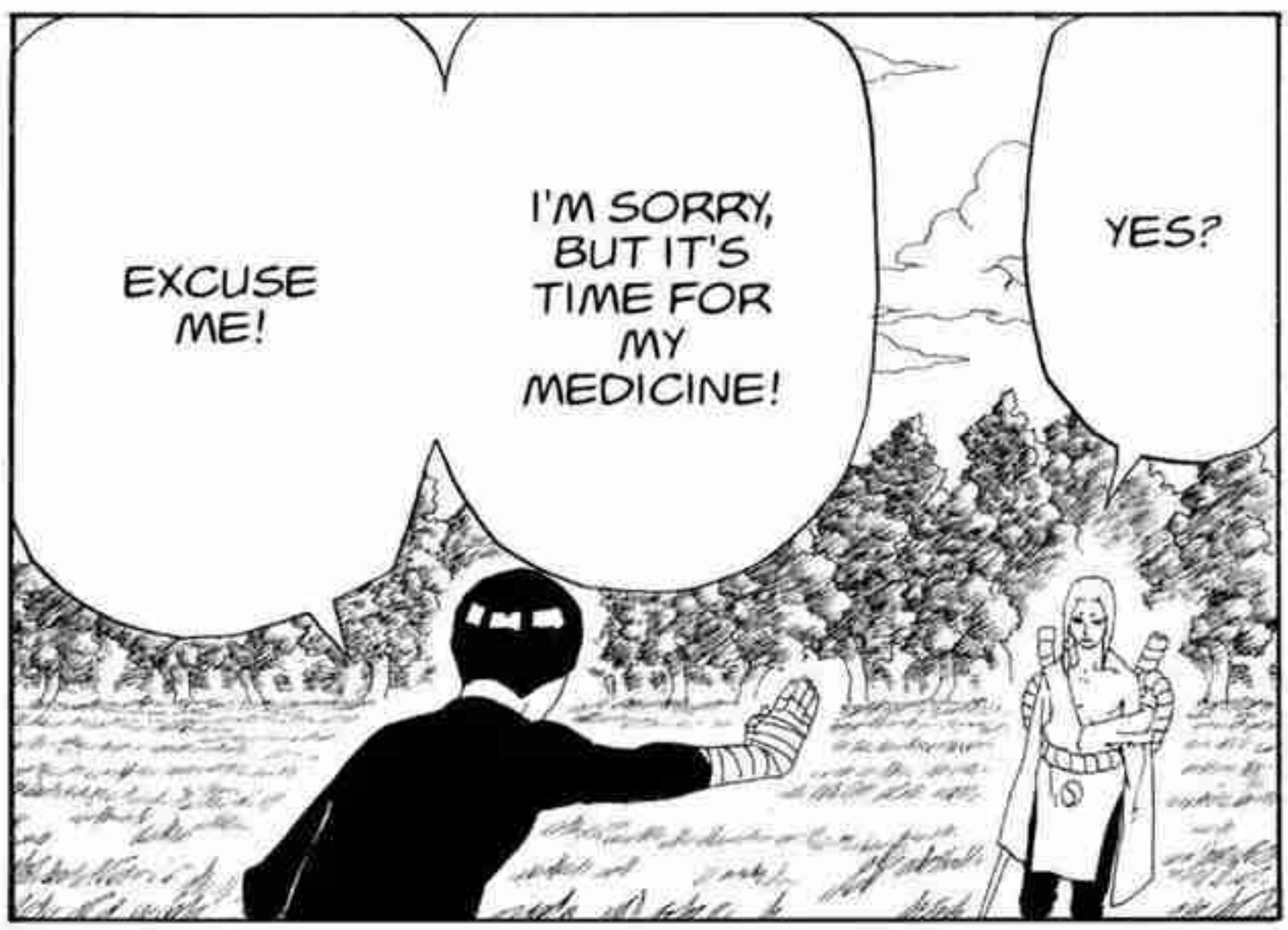
SHHK

READY?
SHF

YOUR MANNER IS FAR TOO... DIRECT.


?!

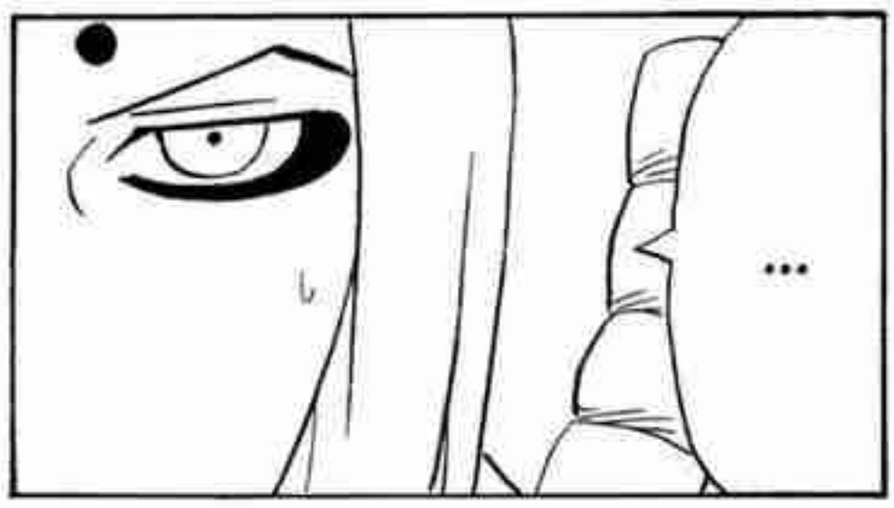
WID
ONE MOMENT, PLEASE!!


EXCUSE ME!
I'M SORRY, BUT IT'S TIME FOR MY MEDICINE!
YES?

SHUF SHUF

I'VE NEVER BEEN MUCH OF ONE FOR MEDICINE, BUT...
SPOP

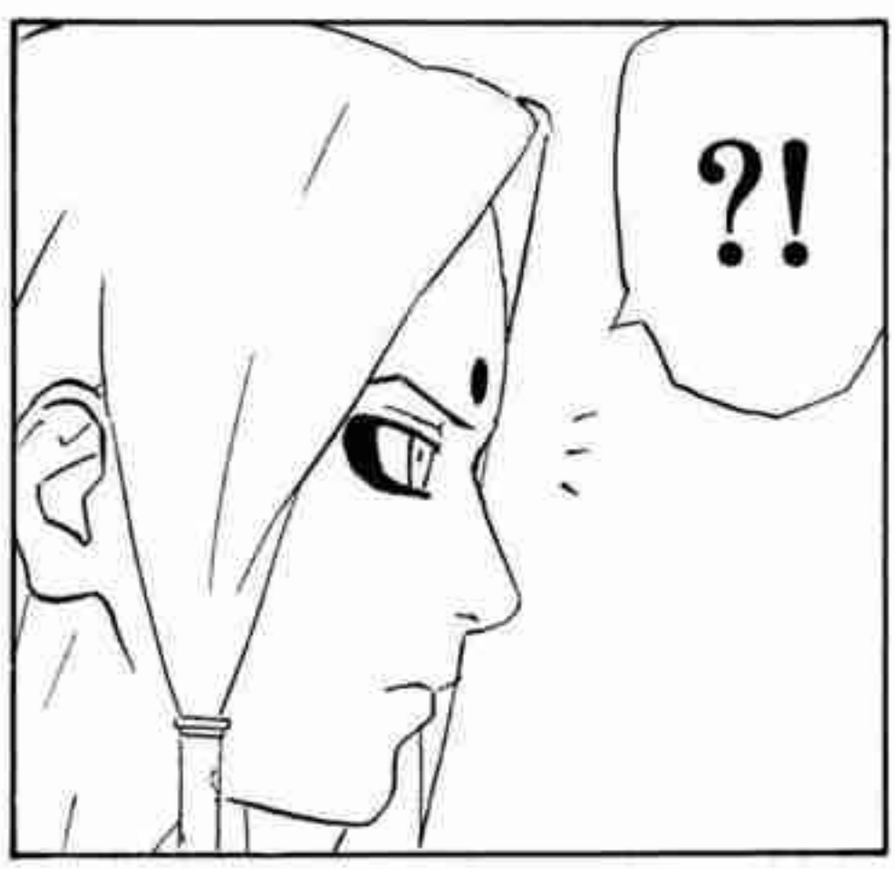
SHF


...

GULP

NGUP

THIS IS THE WORST ONE YET....
BLEH...


?!

...?
FWIW

READ THIS WAY

WHADDAYA LOOKIN' AT, YA JERK!?!

SHF

...HE WENT BERSERK!!

I'M SAYING HE'S A NATURAL-BORN USER...

WHAT IN... HEAVEN DID THAT BOY DRINK?
...

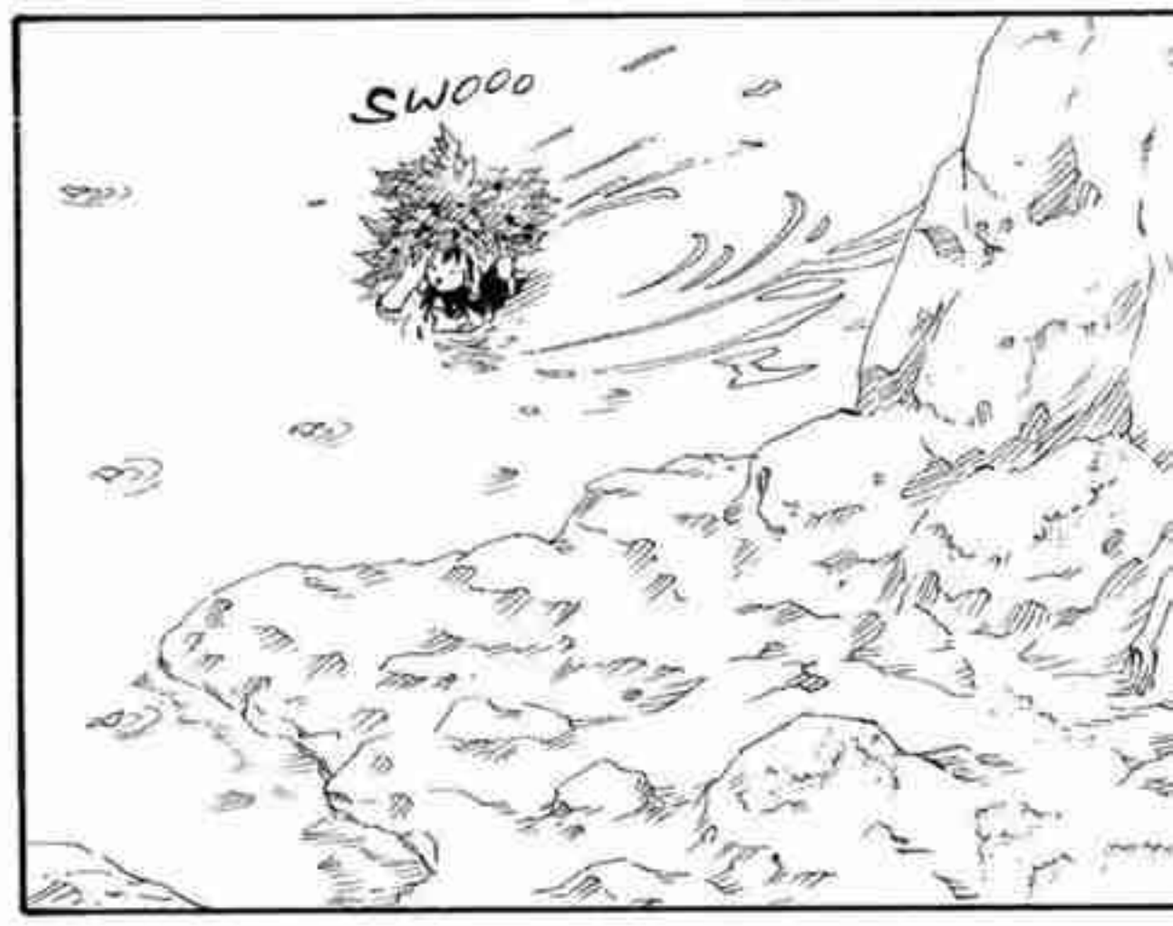
WAIT, WHAT?

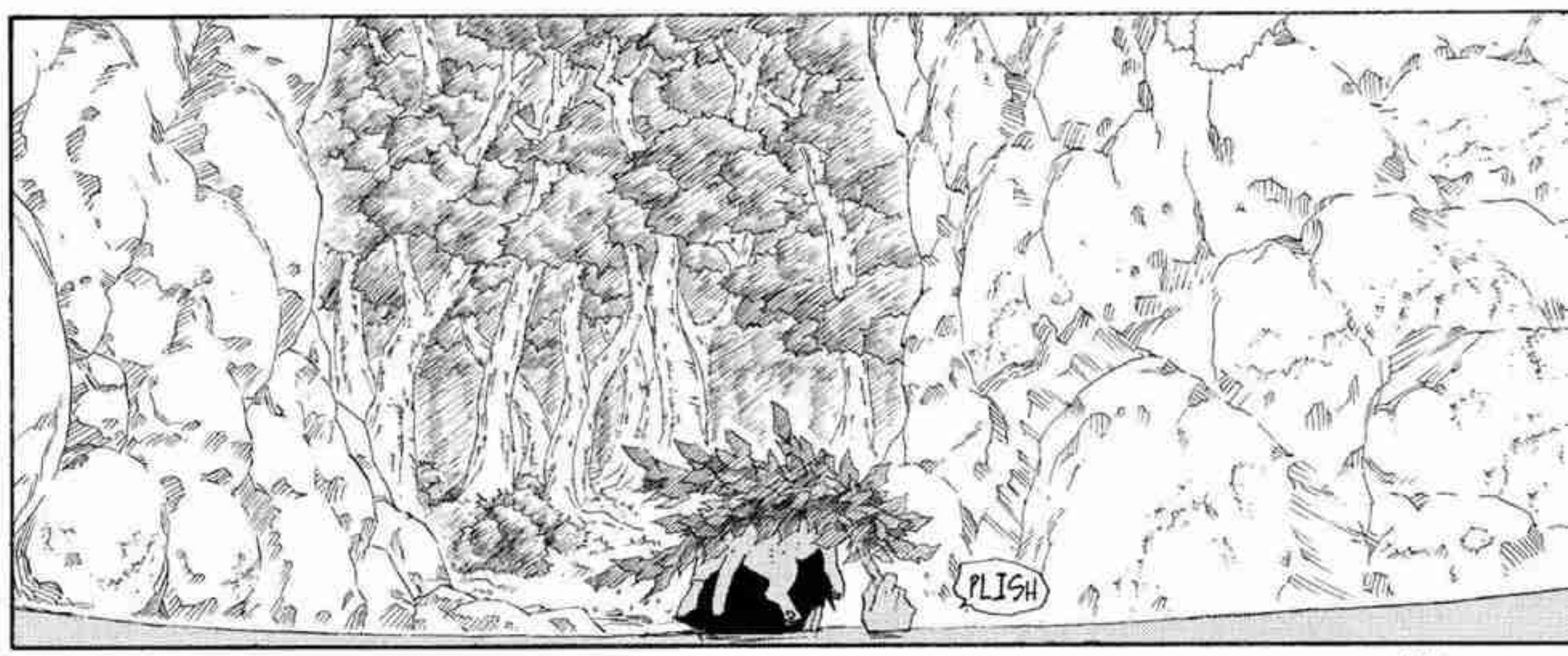
FWIW
...OF THE POTION PUNCH!!

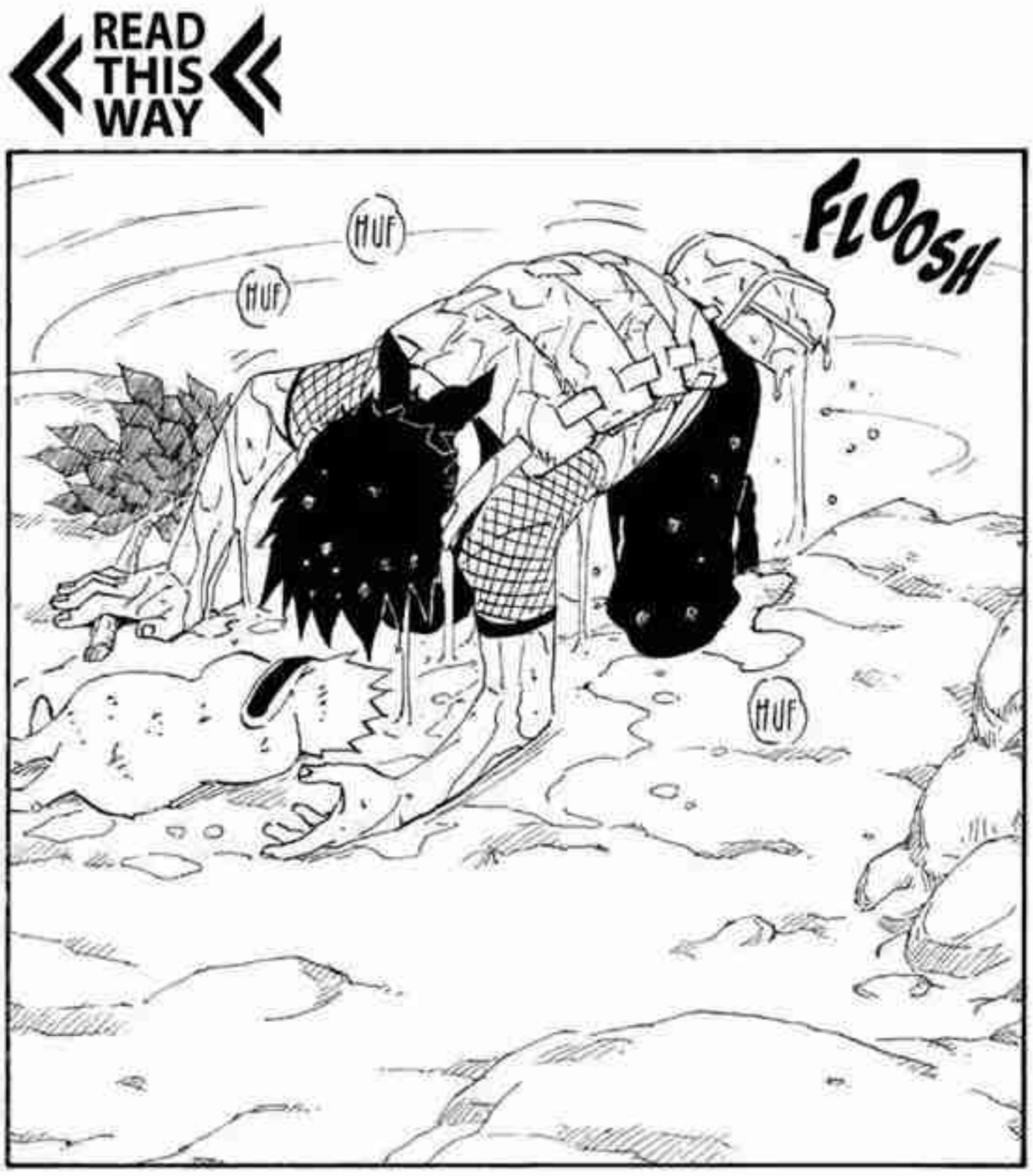
NARUTO
TM

Number 211: Unorthodox...!!

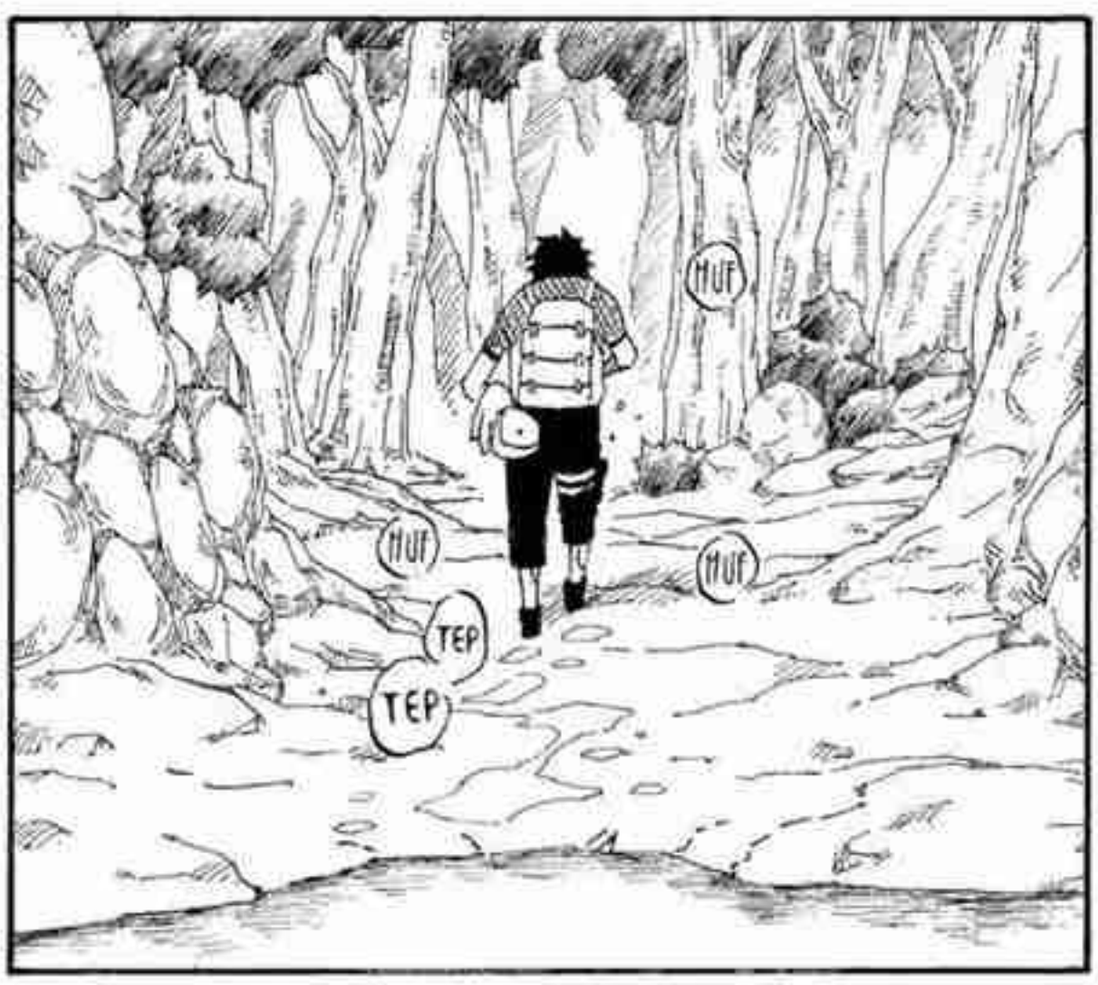
PEEK


SWOOO


PLISH


READ THIS WAY
FLOOSH
HUF
HUF
HUF

FUP
SPISH


HUF
HUF
HUF
TEP
TEP

THIS WOUND... GUESS I NEED TO KEEP IT DRY...
HUF
HUF
UGH...

PISH

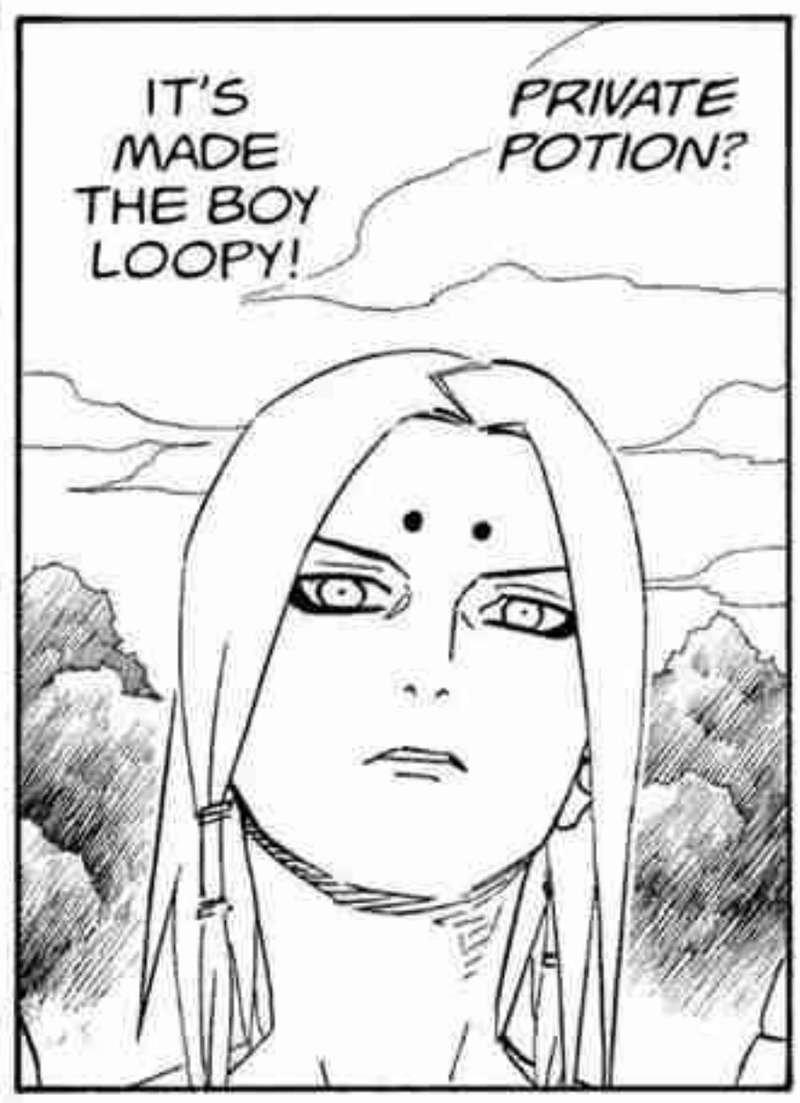
FWIW

FWIW

UNH... *HIC*
FWIW

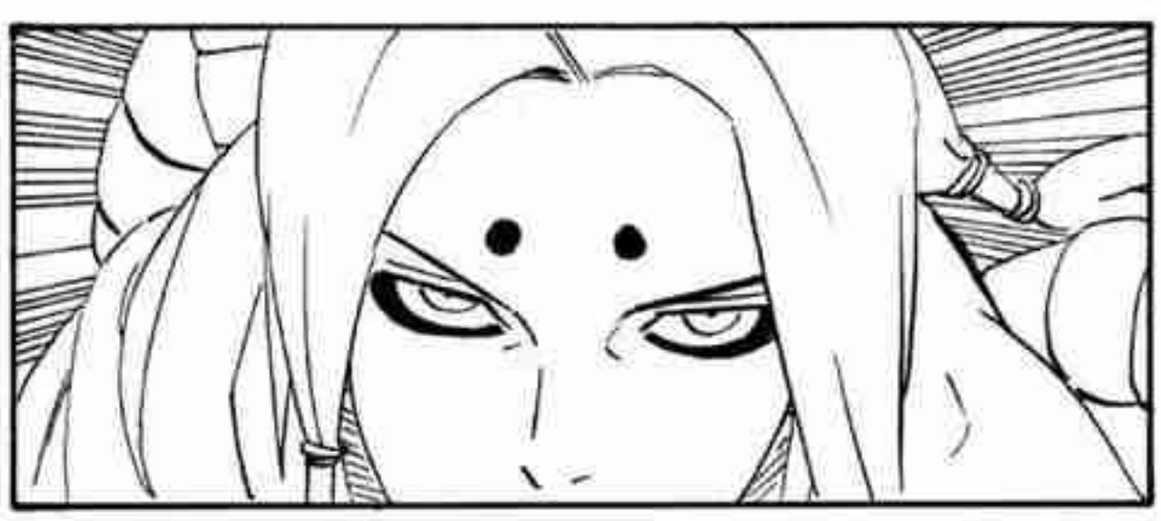
FWIW

SHAA
HYEER I COM-MAH!!


IT'S MADE THE BOY LOOPY!
PRIVATE POTION?

FUSSH

HYAH!



WSH

!

FOOM

WIP

ACHAH!!

PAM
TUK
WSSSH
!!
SNAG
SKSSH

READ THIS WAY
!
FWEE
PSSH
TWA
KAK
SHK
MORE-OVER, TOO FAST!!
HE'S TOO HARD TO PREDICT...
SKSSH

TAK TAK TAK

WOOSH

SHF

TSUBAKI NO MAI! CAMELLIA DANCE!!

FOOM

SKSSH

SHOOM SHOOM SHOOM SHOOM WSH WSH WSH WSH WSH WSH

PAK

FASH

PAK

PAM

!!

SWIP

FSSH

WIP

FWOSH

SHOVE

SHRUF

HA!

PAM

PAK

HWAAAA...

FLUMP

URK!

!

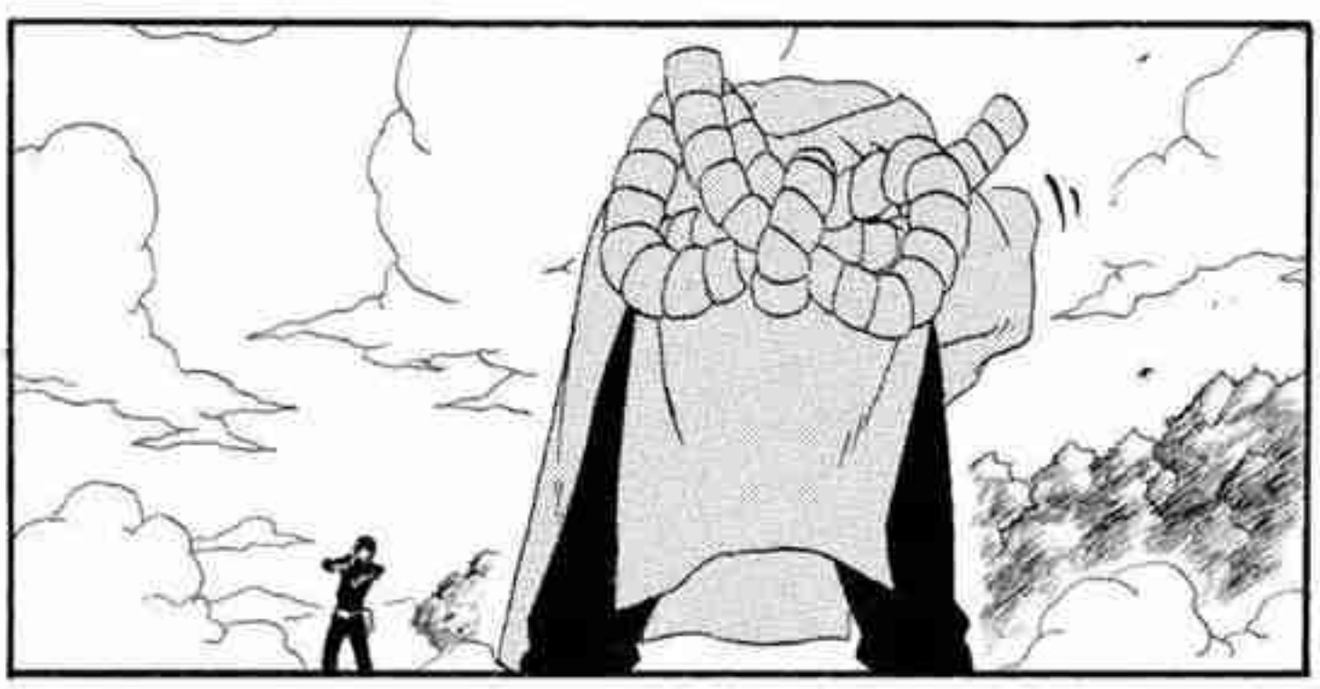
GWUM

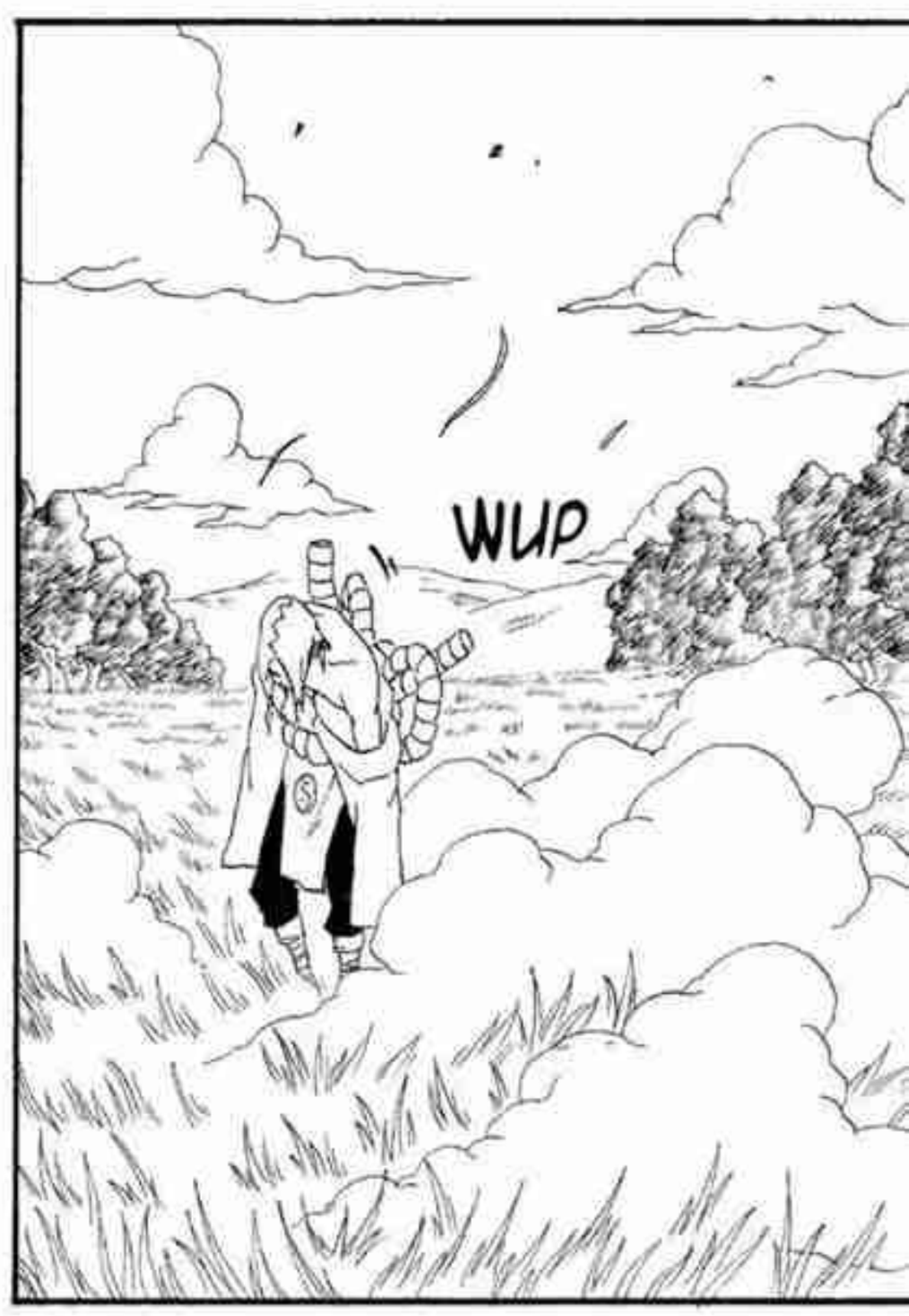
SKRESSSSK

HIC

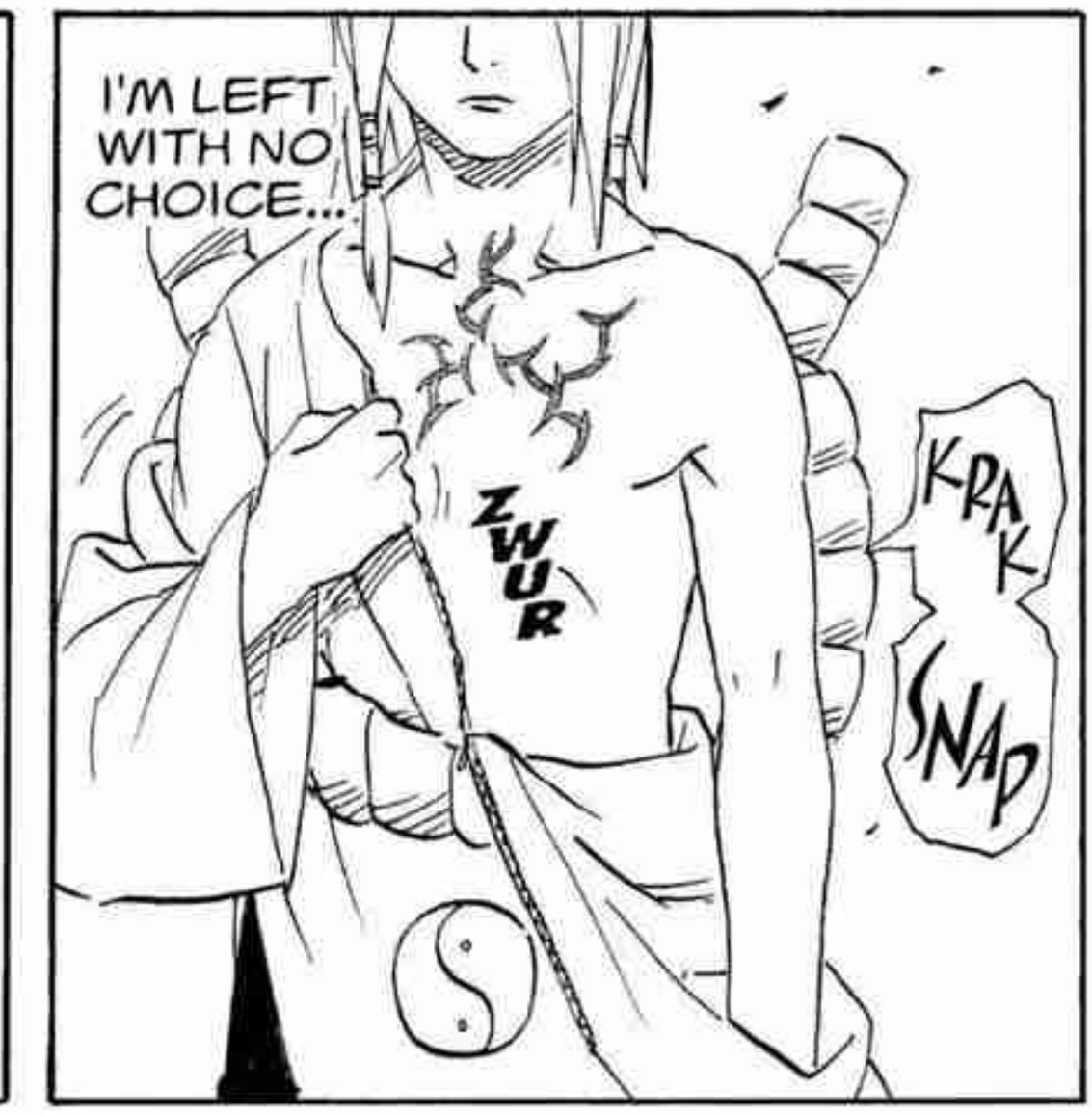
FWIN

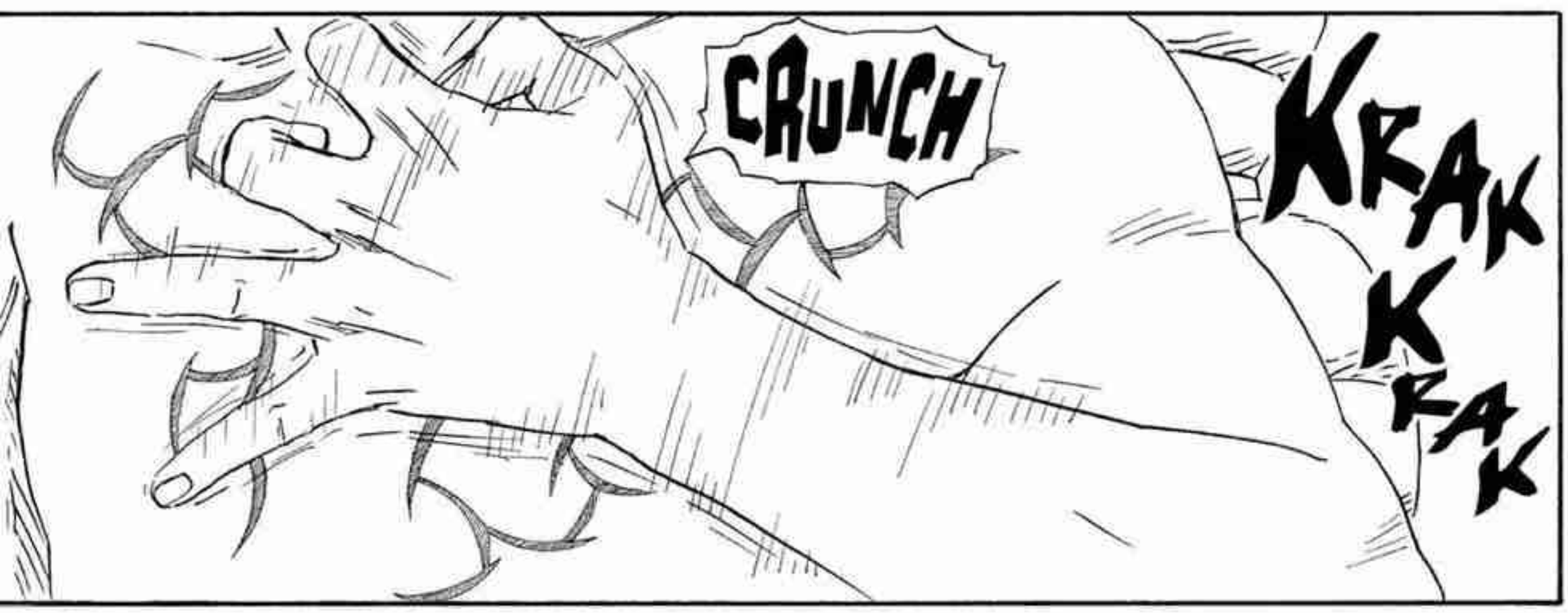
HE HIT ME... THAT TAIJUTSU IS SOMETHING ELSE.
I CAN'T READ HIS MOVES.




WUP

SLUFF
ZWURR
KRAK KRAK


I'M LEFT WITH NO CHOICE...
ZWUR
KRAK
SNAP


CRUNCH
KRAK KRAK

SLURR
SHLIK

GWUR
GWUR

?!

SLURGE

MY ABILITIES STEM FROM MY BONES...

YOU WERE WARNED BY YOUR DOPPEL-GANGER FRIEND, NO?

PAM
SHK
PAM
SHOOM
SHK
SWAKK

ヒ!
ASISH

SKSSSSH

NGAAH!!

?!

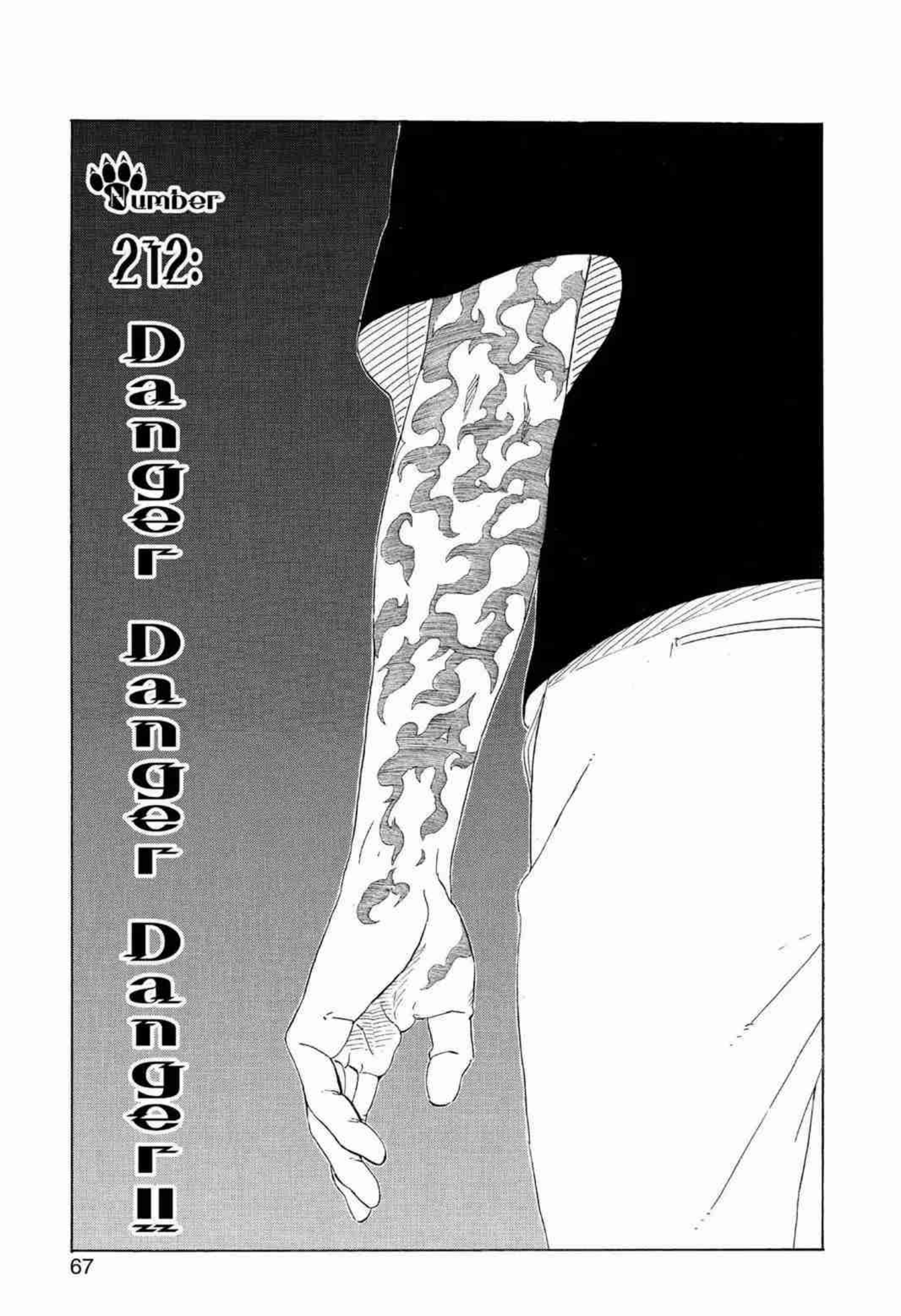
...

THIS IS MY KEKKEI GENKAI.

UNORTH-ODOX, AREN'T I?

SHIN

NARUTO
TM


Number
212:
Danger Danger Danger!!

...!

LOOKS LIKE YOU'VE PULLED YOURSELF TOGETHER.

SHF

KEKKEI GENKAI?!

...?

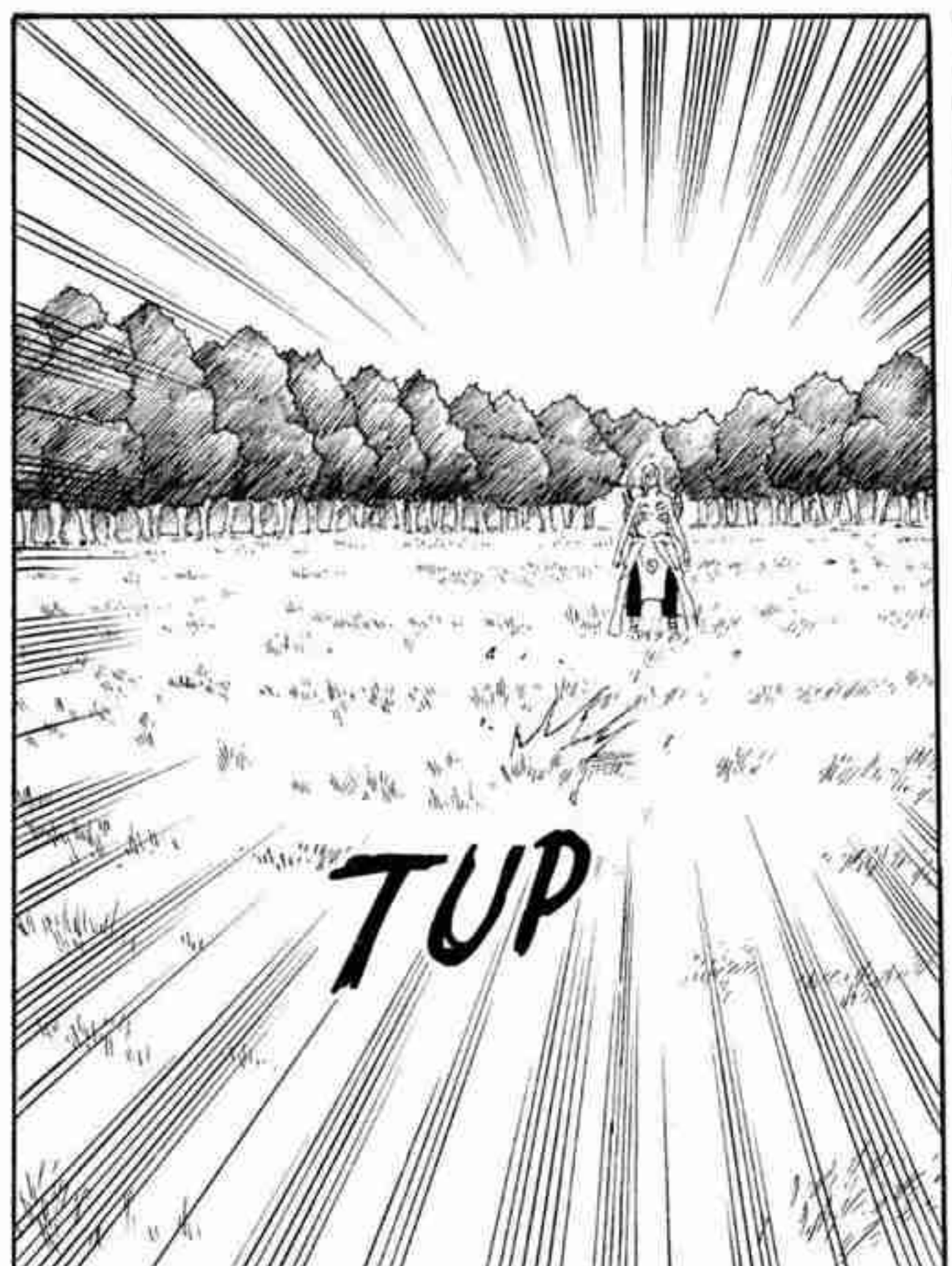
MY KEKKEI GENKAI GRANTS ME COMPLETE CONTROL OF MY OSTEOBLASTS AND OSTEOCLASTS.

WITH IT I REGULATE MY CALCIUM MASS, AND CONCEN-TRATE IT INTO BONES.

AND YET FOR ME THAT NUMBER IS NOT FIXED...

PWUP

THE HUMAN BODY IS COMPOSED OF JUST OVER TWO HUNDRED BONES.



SKIFF

KARAMATSU NO MAI! LARCH DANCE!

PUP

PUP

PUP

PUP

KASHOOM SHOOM SHOOM!

SPLAK

PISH

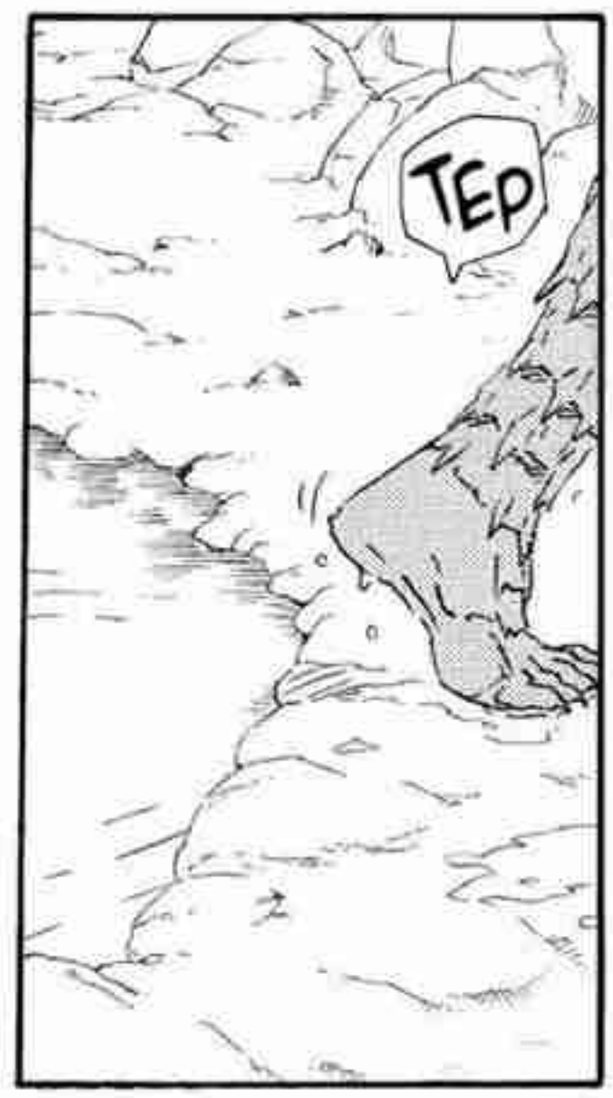
HE CAN'T HAVE WANDERED TOO FAR!
HMPH. WITH THOSE WOUNDS ...

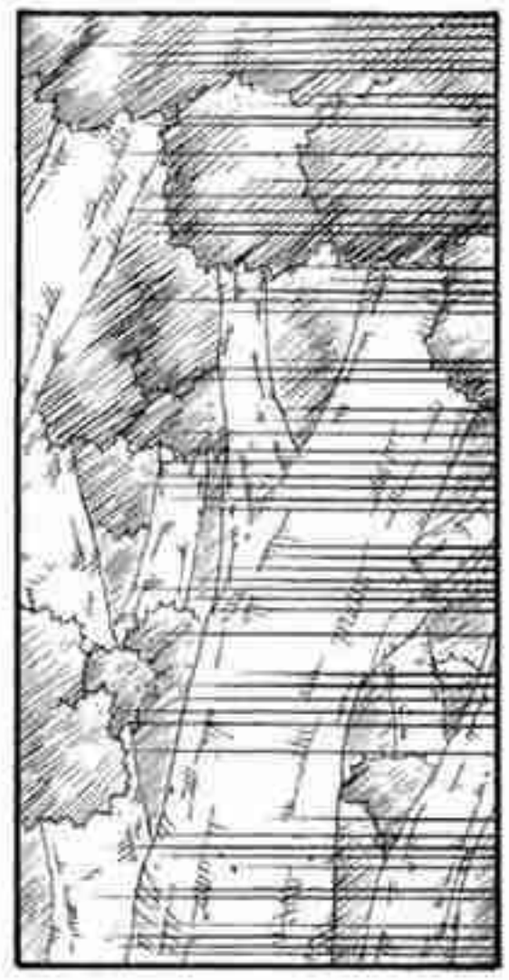
!!
SNUFF

THAT'S IT... I CAN'T MOVE ANOTHER INCH...
HUF
HUF

AND...

HE'S CAUGHT UP ALREADY?!
OH NO...


TEP



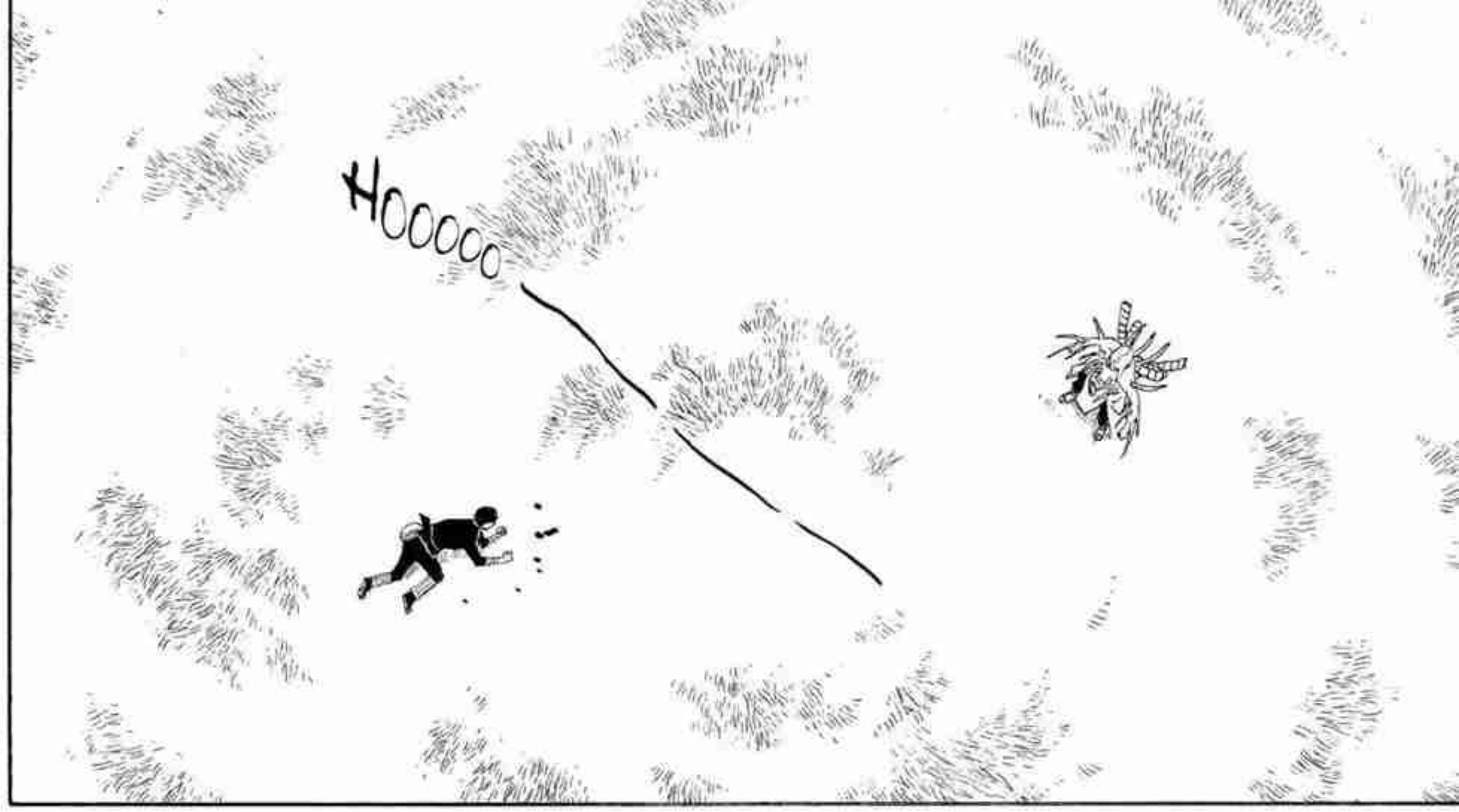
RATS... THIS KEEPS UP, I'LL RUN CLEAN OUT OF CHAKRA...
URRK...

GRRG...

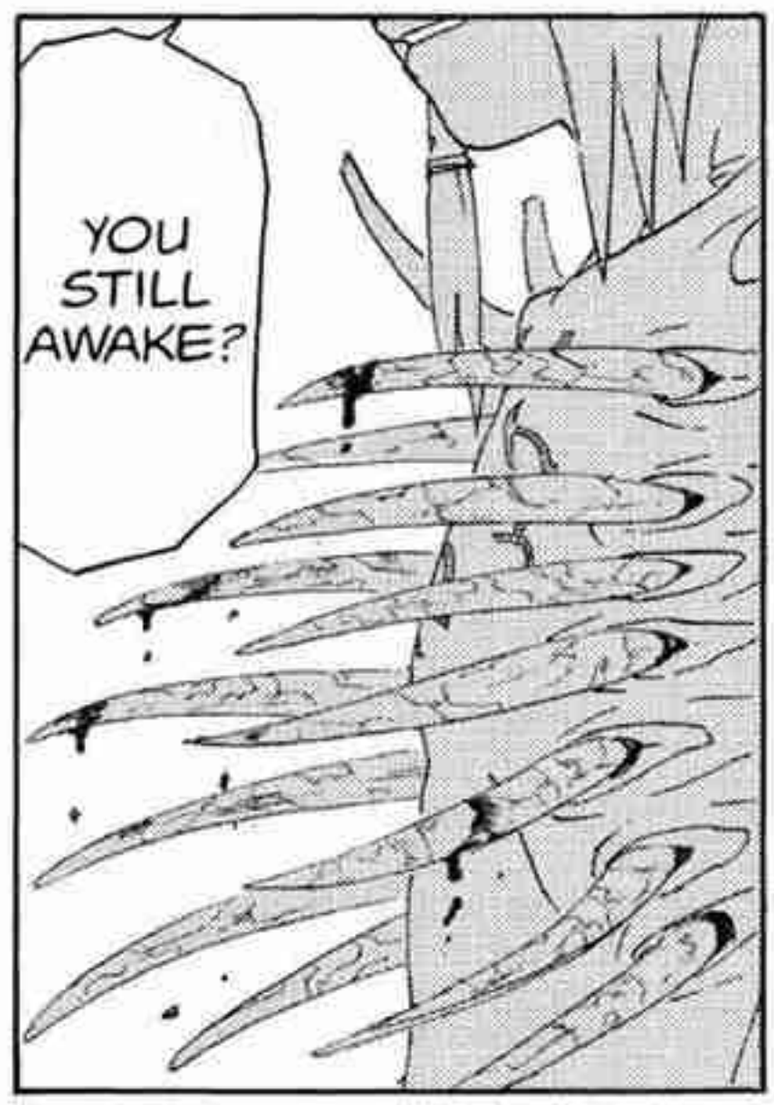
THINK, SHIKAMARU. THINK! THERE'S GOTTA BE SOME WAY...
NEED SOME KINDA STRATEGY HERE...
OKAY, CALM DOWN.

ZWURK

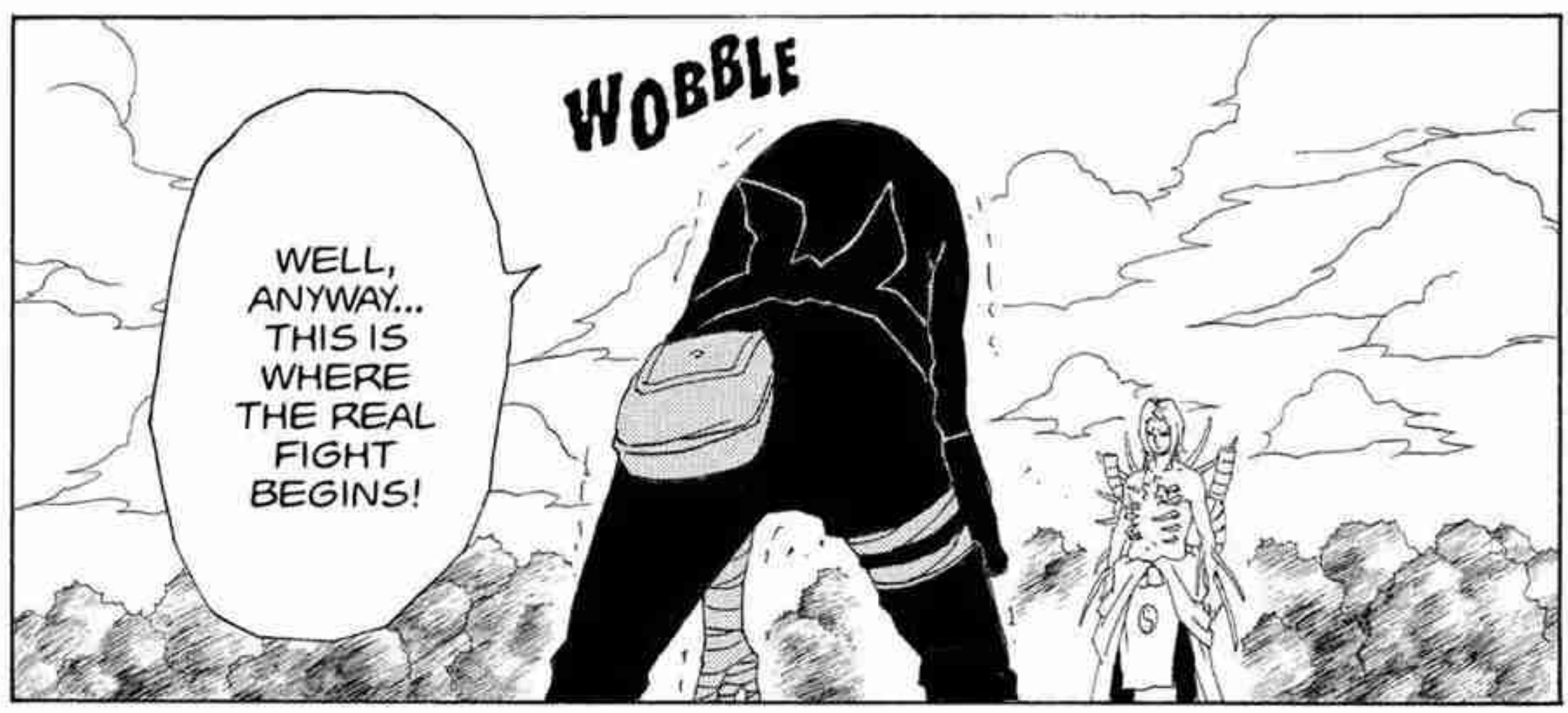
ZWURK


HOOOOO

FOR SOME REASON... I DON'T FEEL SO GOOD...
...


YOU STILL AWAKE?

HUF
HUF


WOBBLE
WELL, ANYWAY... THIS IS WHERE THE REAL FIGHT BEGINS!

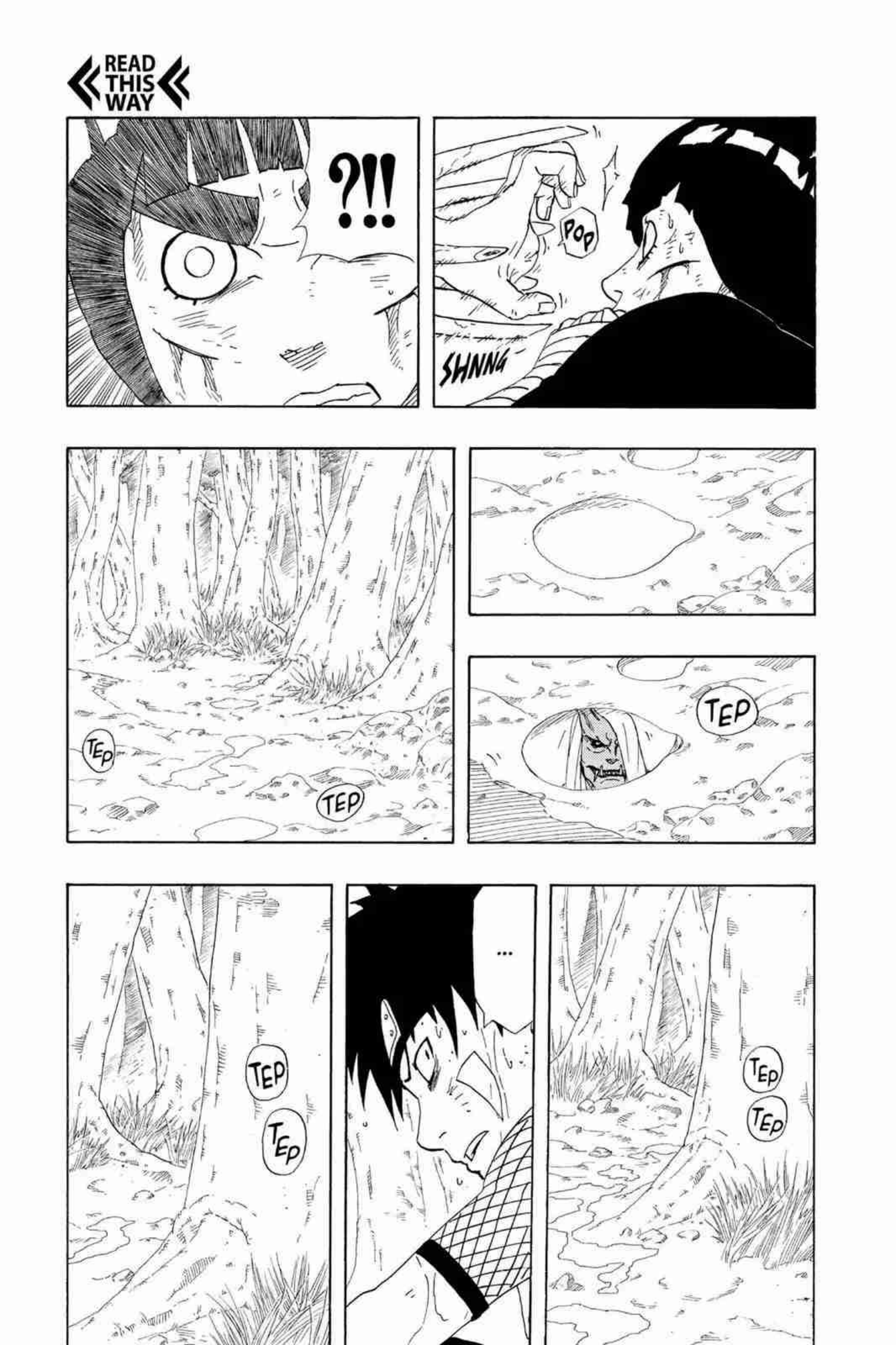
READ THIS WAY
BUT MAYBE I CAN OPEN ONE OF THE EIGHT INNER GATES, IF IT'S JUST THE FIRST ONE... JUST KAIMON, THE GATE OF OPENING.
I JUST GOT OUT OF SURGERY... SO I CAN'T GO TOO CRAZY...
FLIF
FLIF
SO I GUESS I SHOULD AVOID ANY MOVES BIG ENOUGH TO... WELL, KILL ME...
RIGHT NOW MY JOB IS TO HOLD HIM AS LONG AS I CAN.
TAK TAK TAK TAK
...
FOR-WARD LOTUS!!

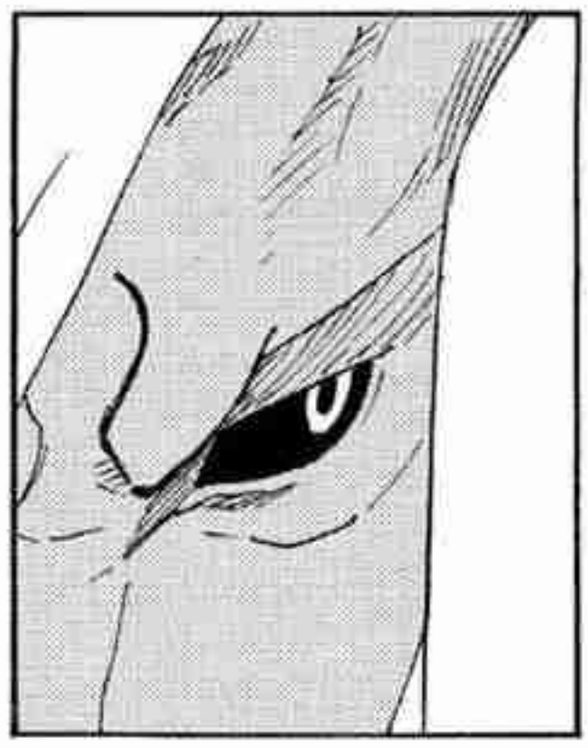
SPA

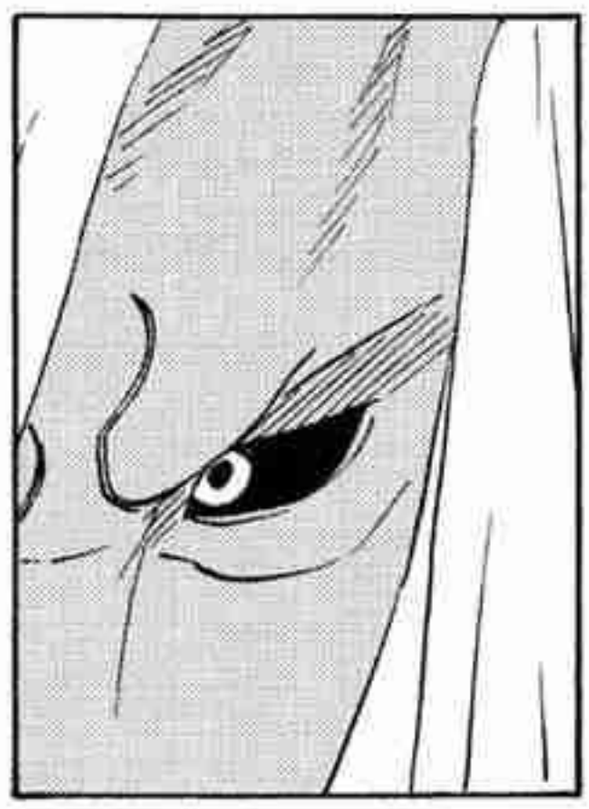
?!!

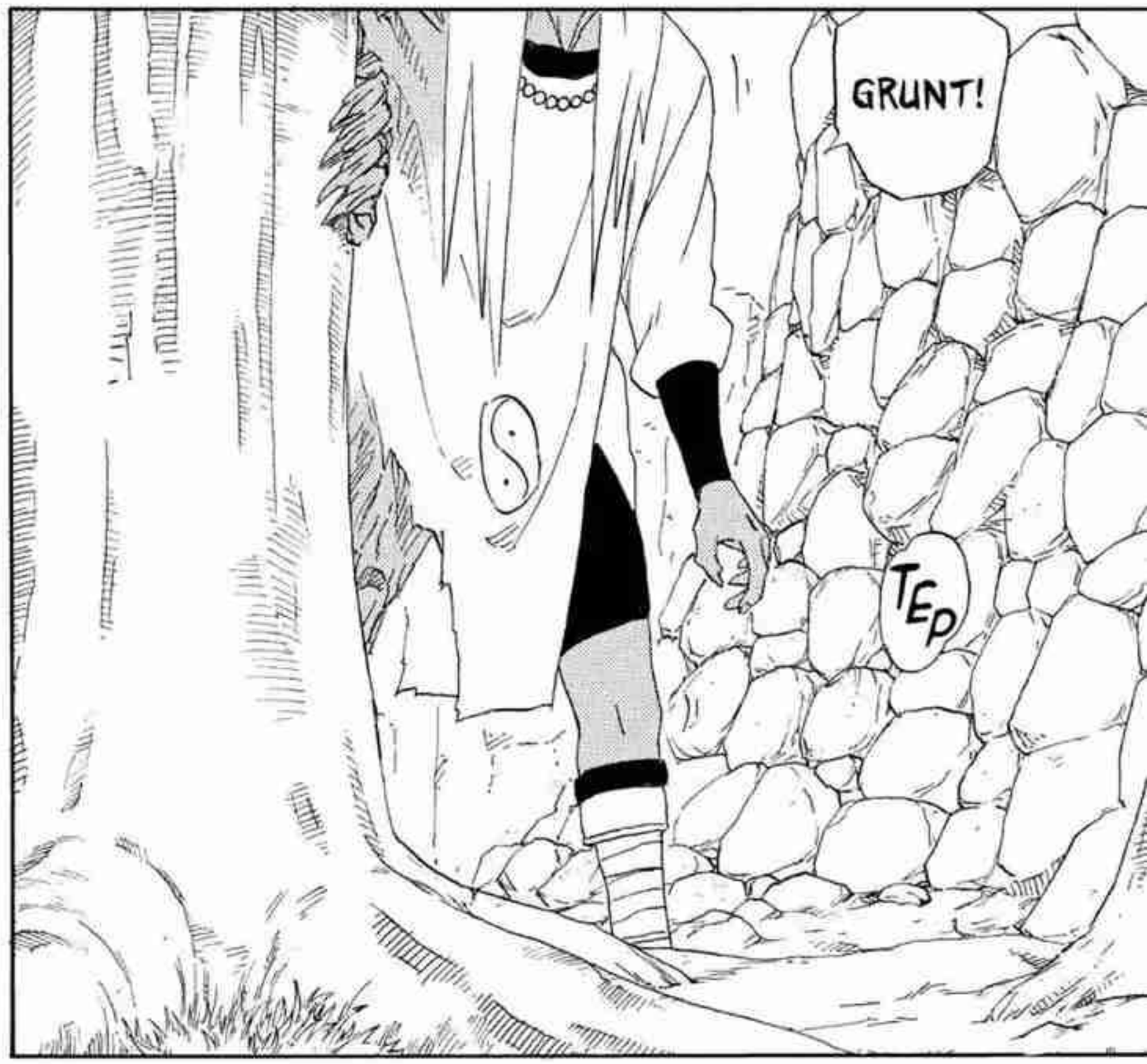
BUT IT STOPS HERE.
IMPRES-SIVE SPEED...

CLAMP
URK!
HIS BONES ABSORBED THE IMPACT OF MY KICK?!


READ THIS WAY
?!!
POP
SHNNG
TEP
TEP
TEP
...
TEP
TEP
TEP
TEP






GRUNT!
TEP

UNGH...
GRR...

READ THIS WAY
THERE'S NO ONE COMING FOR ME. IT'S NOT LIKE THAT TIME WITH MASTER ASUMA...
I'M NEARLY DRAINED...
...
JUST A LITTLE MORE... SCUMBAG!
GET AHOLD OF YOURSELF!
COME ON... WHERE'S THE GOOD IN HOPING FOR A MIRACLE?
PHEW. I'M... I'M SAFE.
HIS SCENT'S FADING...
...
SNIFF

?!!

WHO'S SAFE?

WAIT. MY JACKET?!

!

LITTLE WONDER I COULDN'T PLACE YOU.
SO THAT'S HOW YOU ERASED YOUR SCENT, HUH?
I'M IMPRESSED. YOU DO KNOW HOW ODOR WORKS.

I KNEW IT... HEH HEH.
IT'S HARD TO DETECT YOUR OWN SCENT, ISN'T IT. IT'S ALL TOO FAMILIAR.

SHFF
I'M STANDING BEFORE YOU. DON'T YOU THINK NOW IS A GOOD TIME TO BEG FOR YOUR LIFE?
HUH?!

SHF
SNIK
AW, RATS.
AND THEN... THERE'S THE WAY YOU SPLIT UP TO HUNT. THAT DID A NUMBER ON US.

WSSH
TRCK
WIPE THAT SMIRK OFF YOUR FACE!

TWIK
SHRUFF

FOOSH
NOW DIE!!

THAT'S IT, THEN. I'M DONE FOR.
CRUD... I CAN'T THINK OF A SINGLE WAY OUT OF THIS.
GRR

?!!

GWE

GAH!

EN

?!!

!!

SKF

GASP

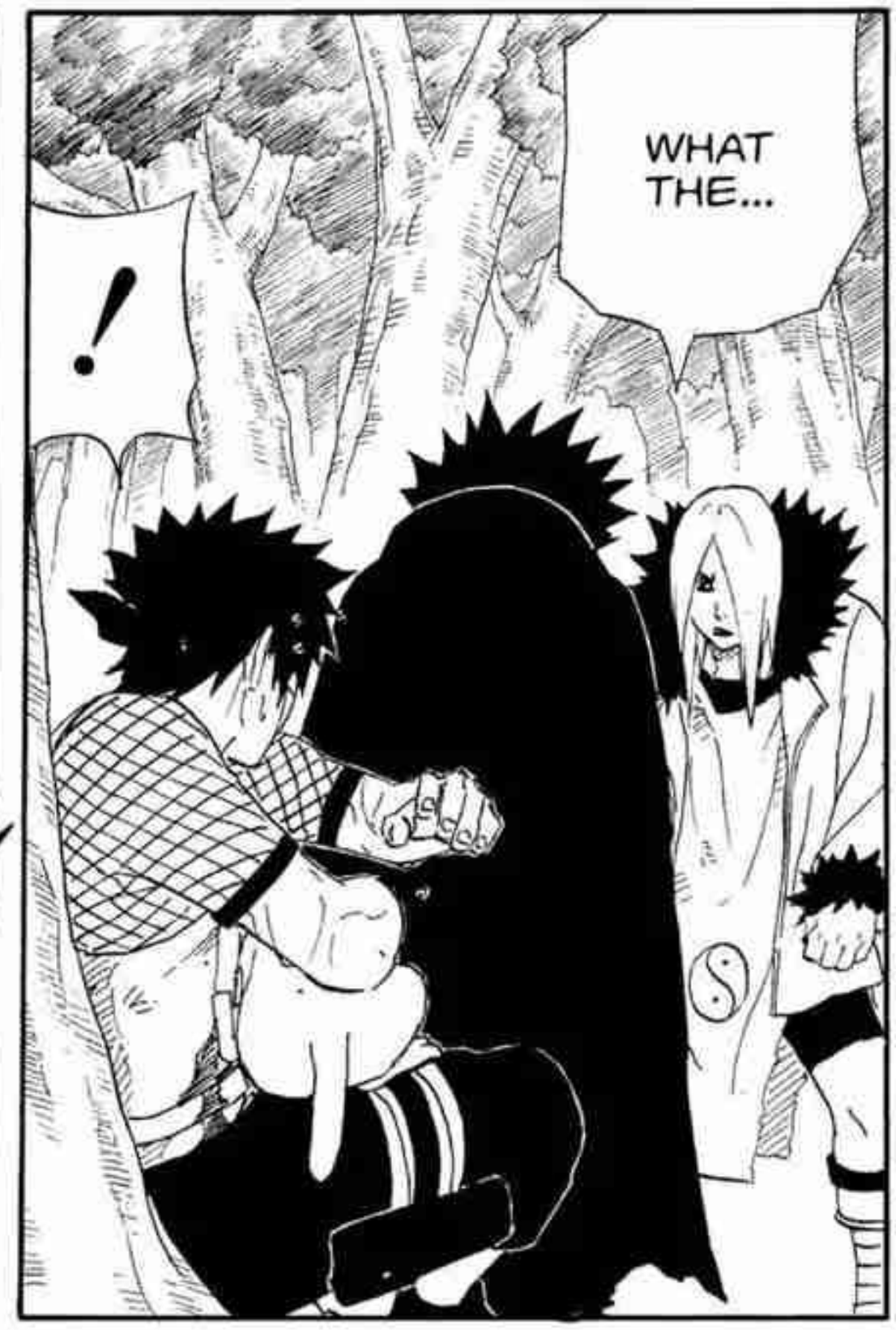
WHO THE...

URK!

SKR

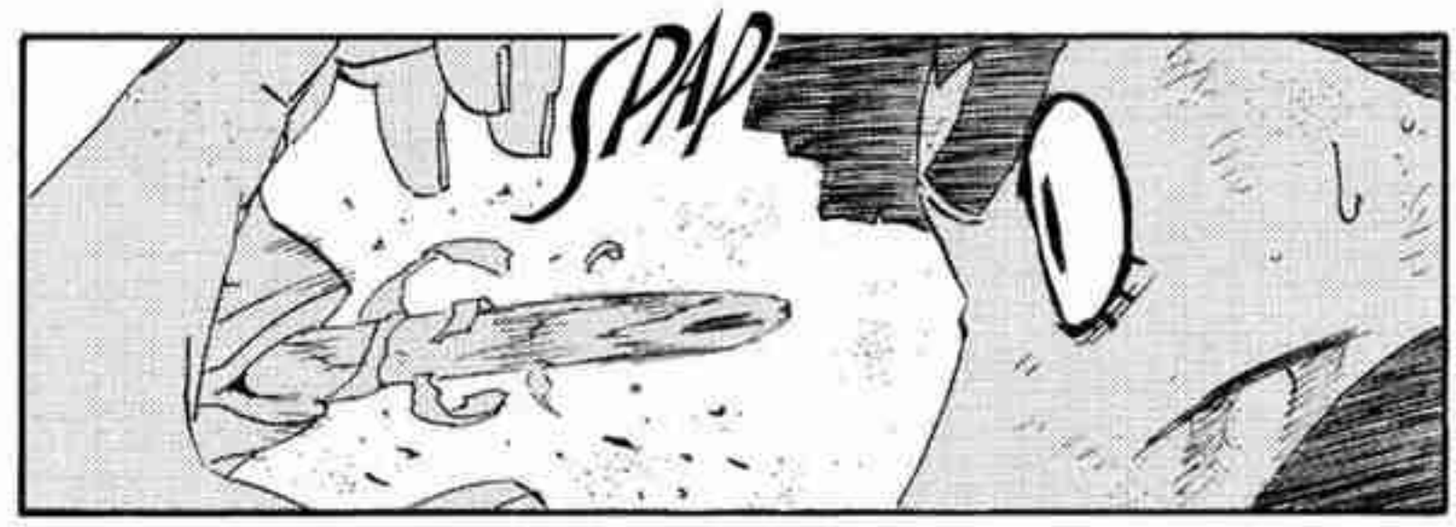
SKR

?!
SHK


WHAT THE...
!

LOOKS LIKE I'VE GOT AN ALLY.

AND YOU ARE...?
BLOOF


SPAP

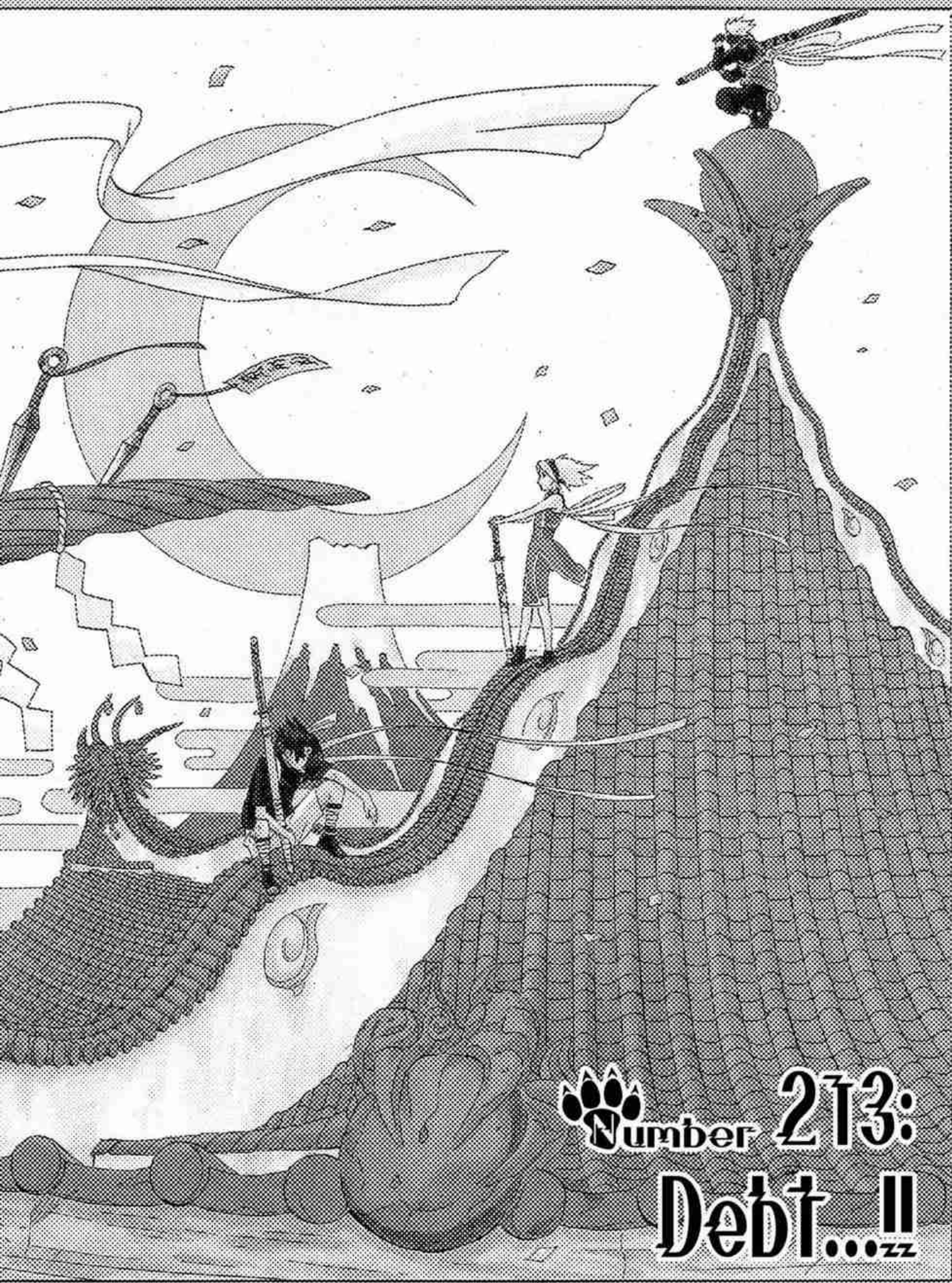
WHOA!
?!
PAWOOF

THE SAND...
TEP
ALLIES OF KONOHA.

...
NINJA.
KLANG

NARUTO
TM

Number 213: Debt...!!



Number 213: Debt...!!

NARUTO
-ナルト-

SHK
SHK

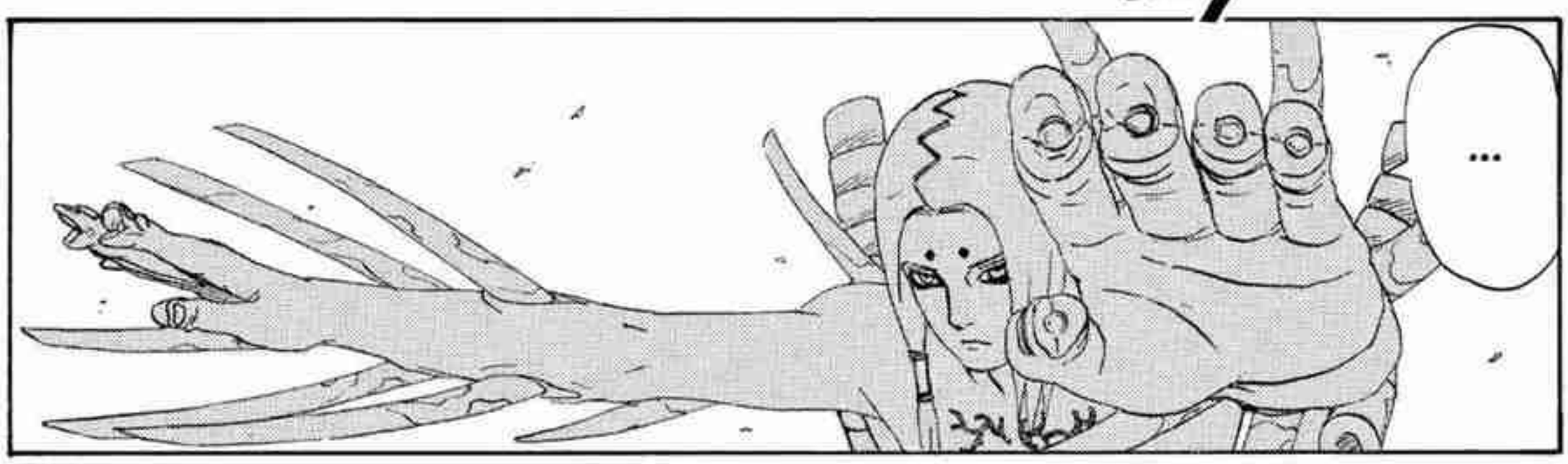
TESHI-SENDAN! DIGITAL SHRAPNEL!!

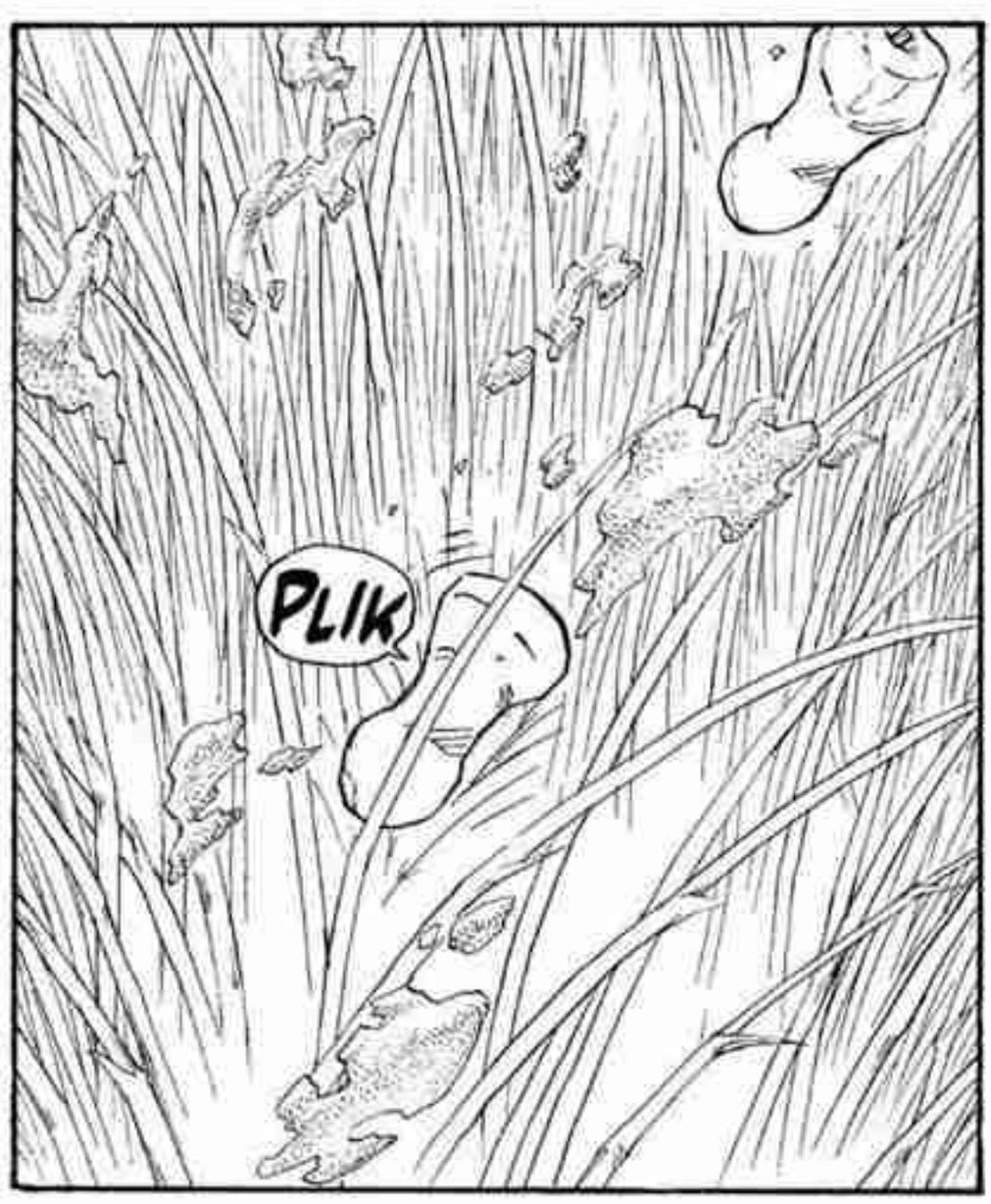
FSSH

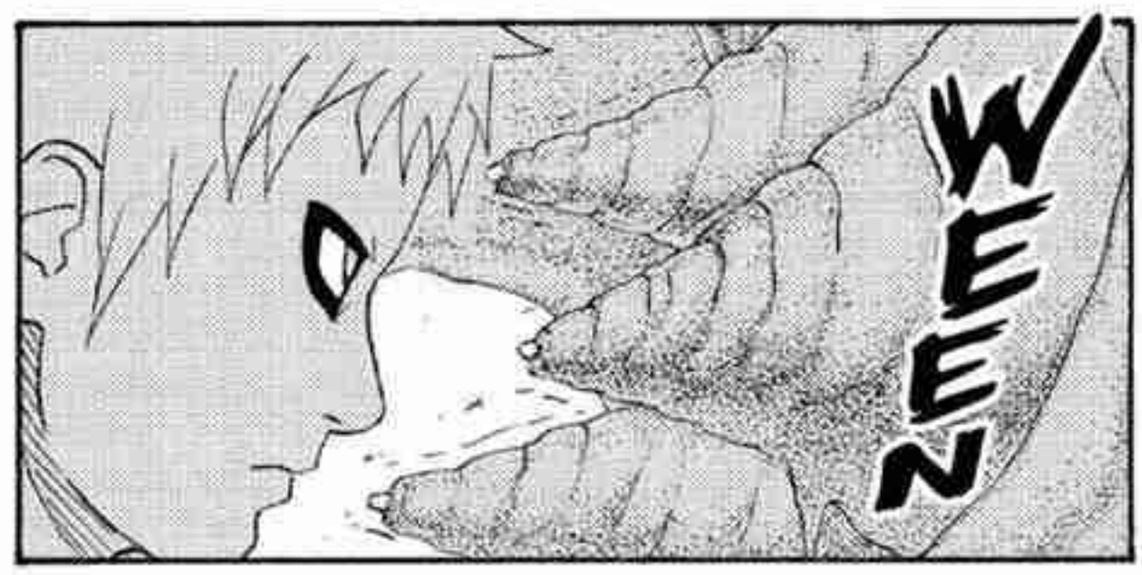
FSSH

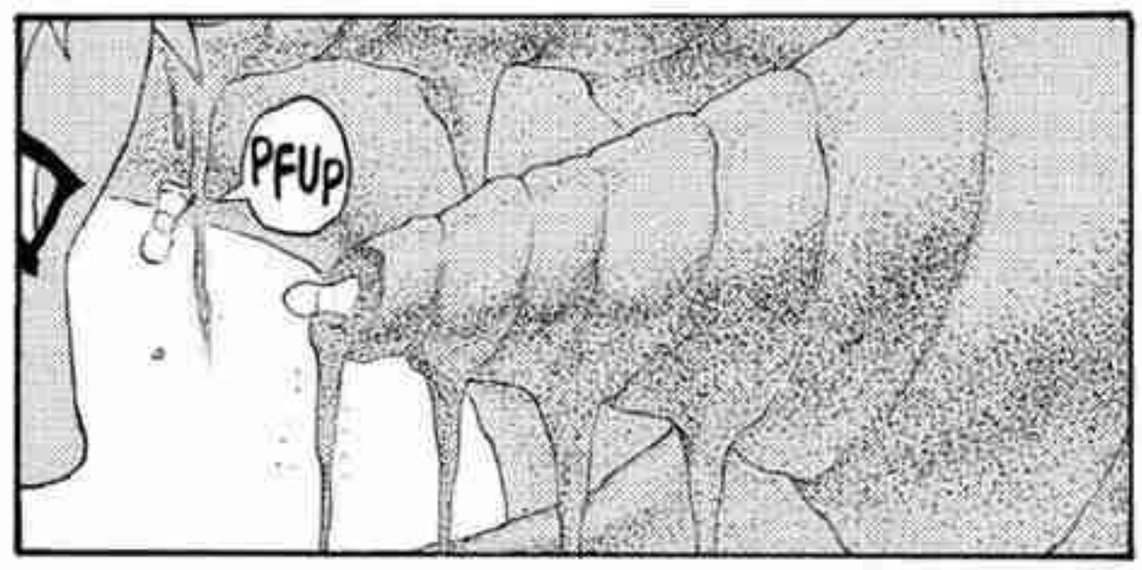
SHOOMSHOOM

PoFF PoFF PoFF PoFF PoFF PoFF





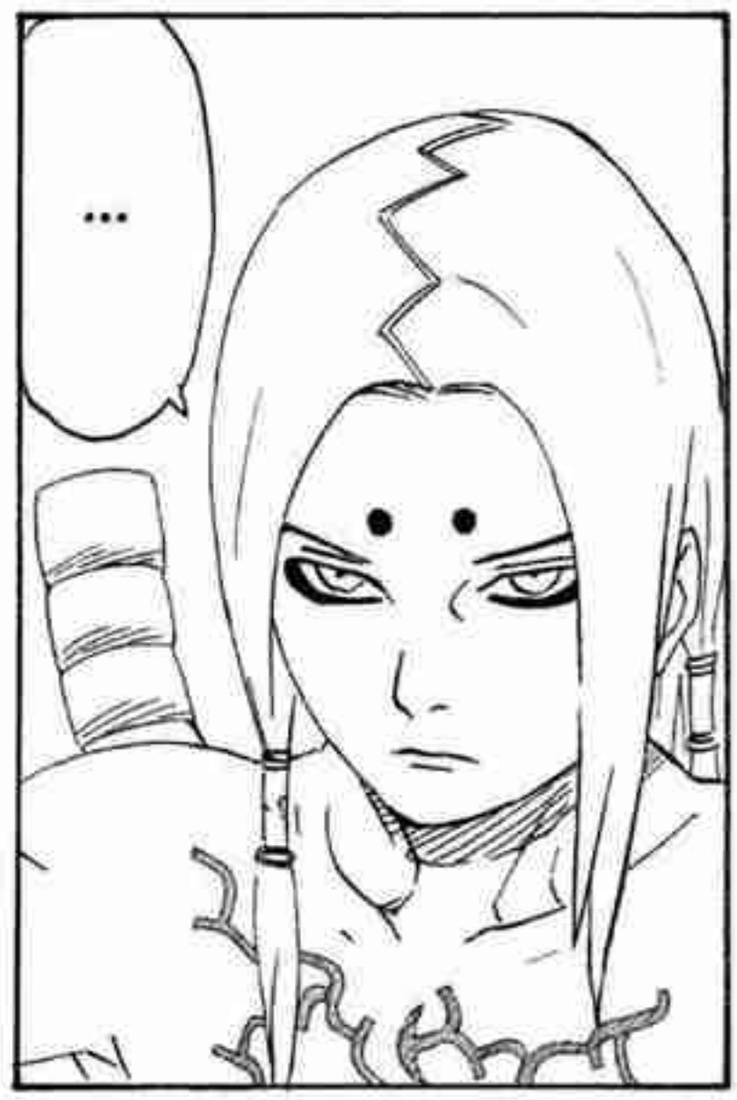




YOU'RE IMPA-TIENT.

DID HE JUST FIRE THE BONES FROM HIS FINGERTIPS?!

!
WHEN LAST WE FOUGHT...
YOU WERE FASTER AND SHARPER THAN THIS.


...

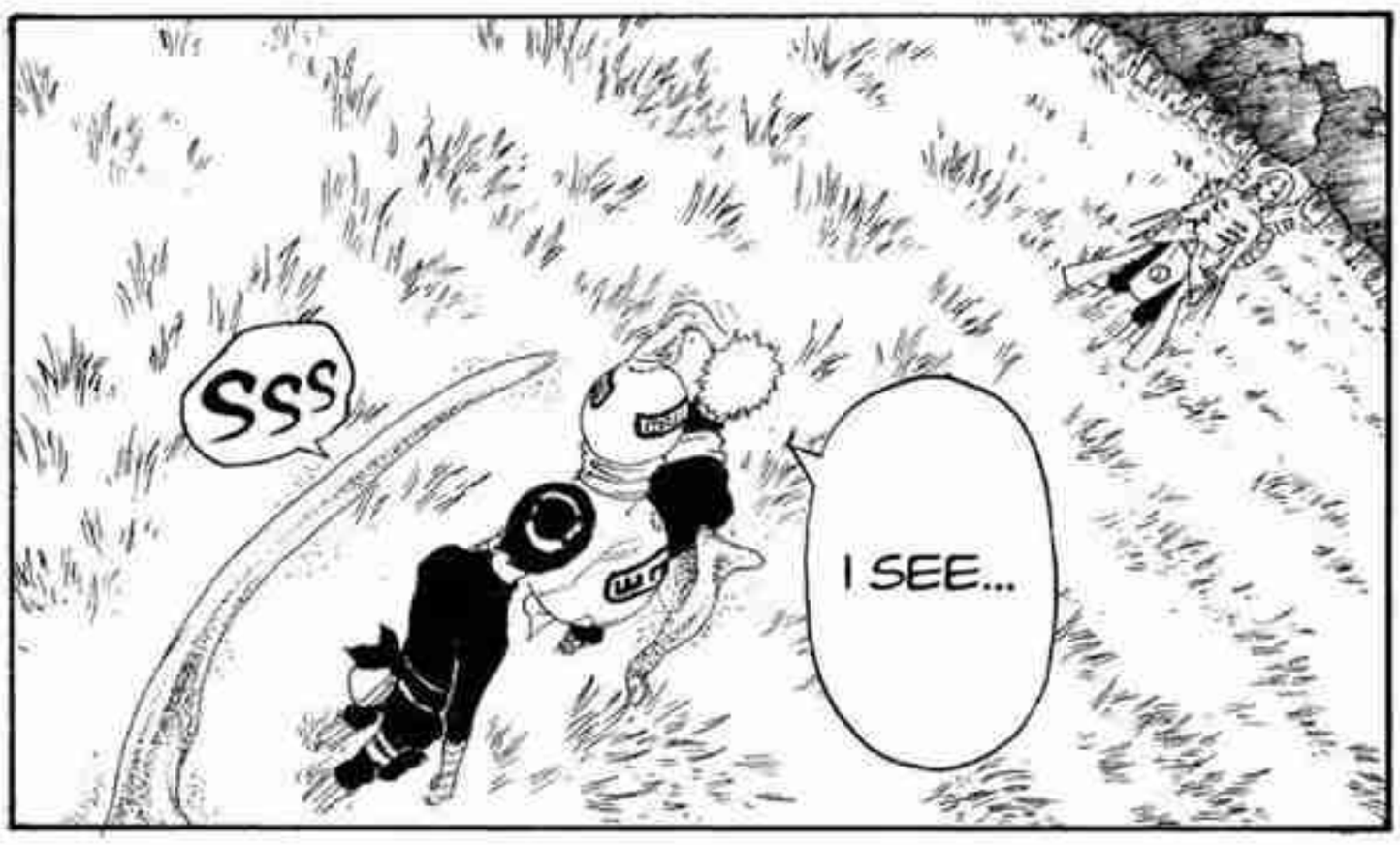
WUP
THANKS FOR REMINDING ME.

...

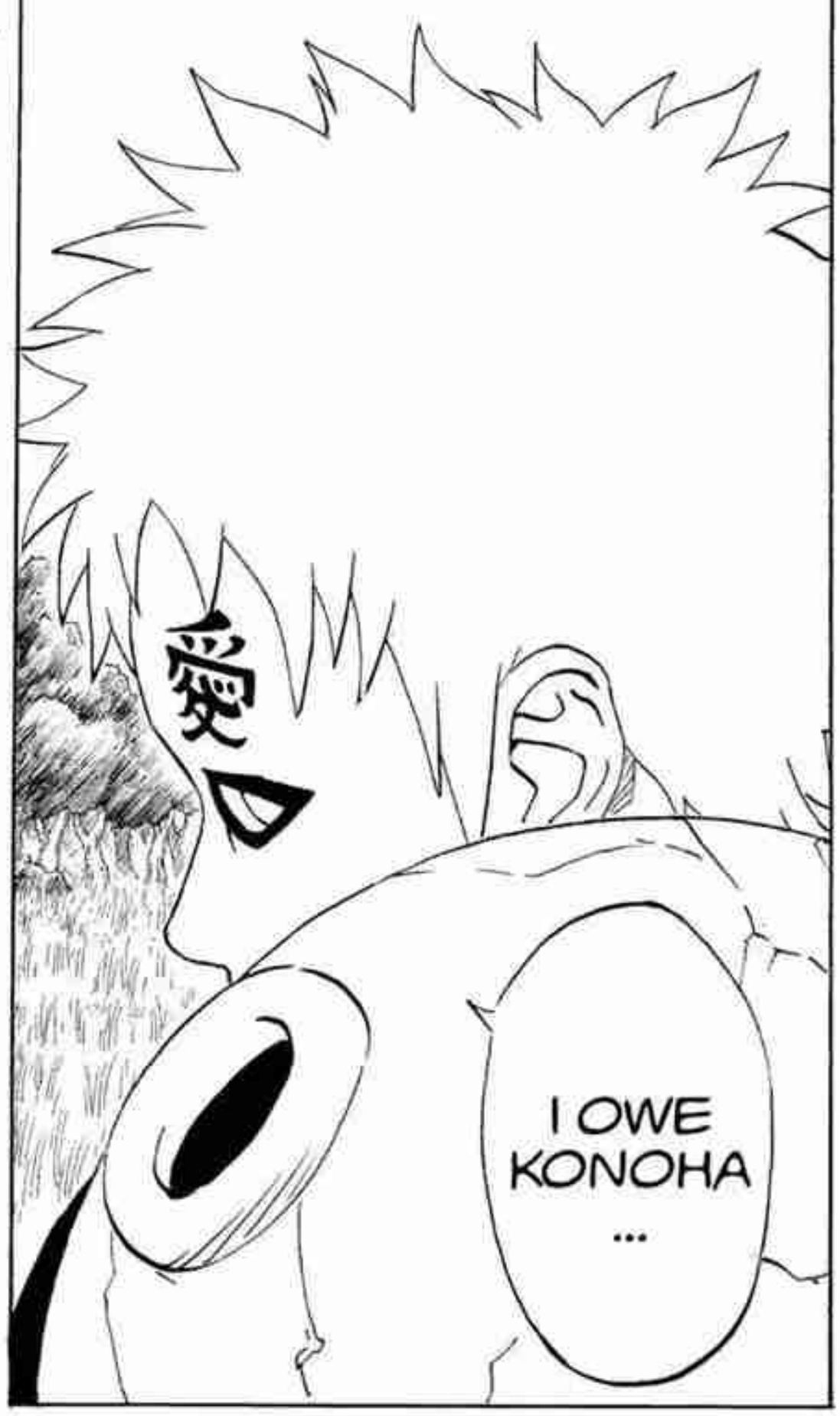
NOT THAT I HOLD A GRUDGE...

愛

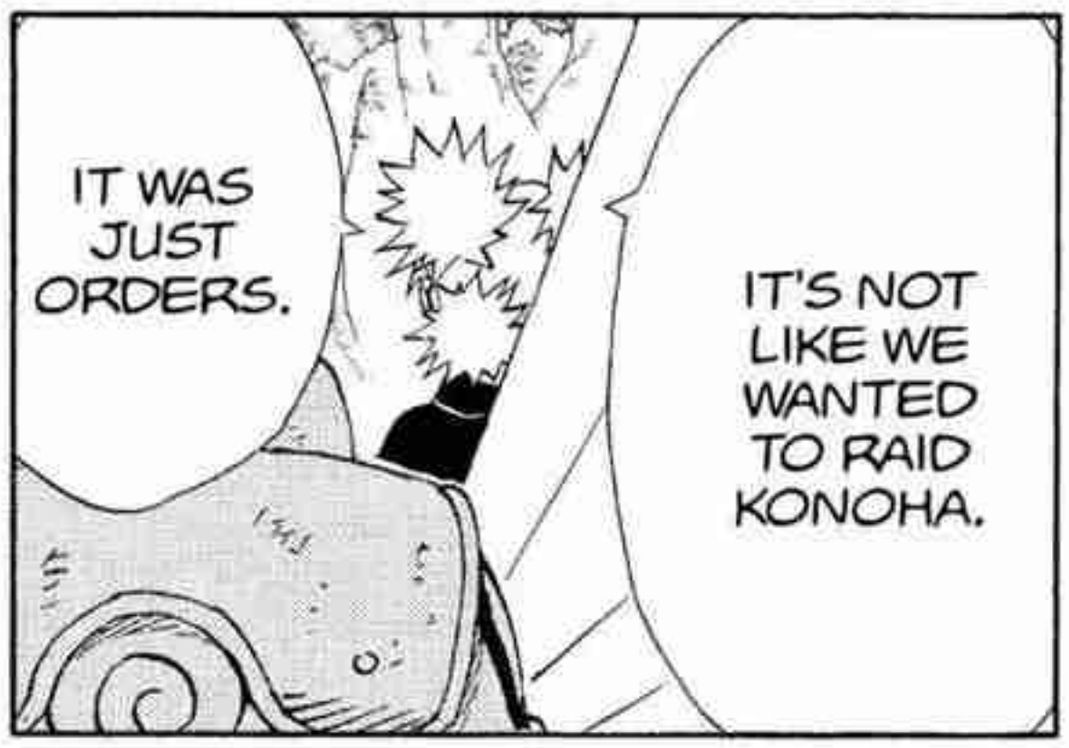
BUT YOU REALLY DID A NUMBER ON ME.



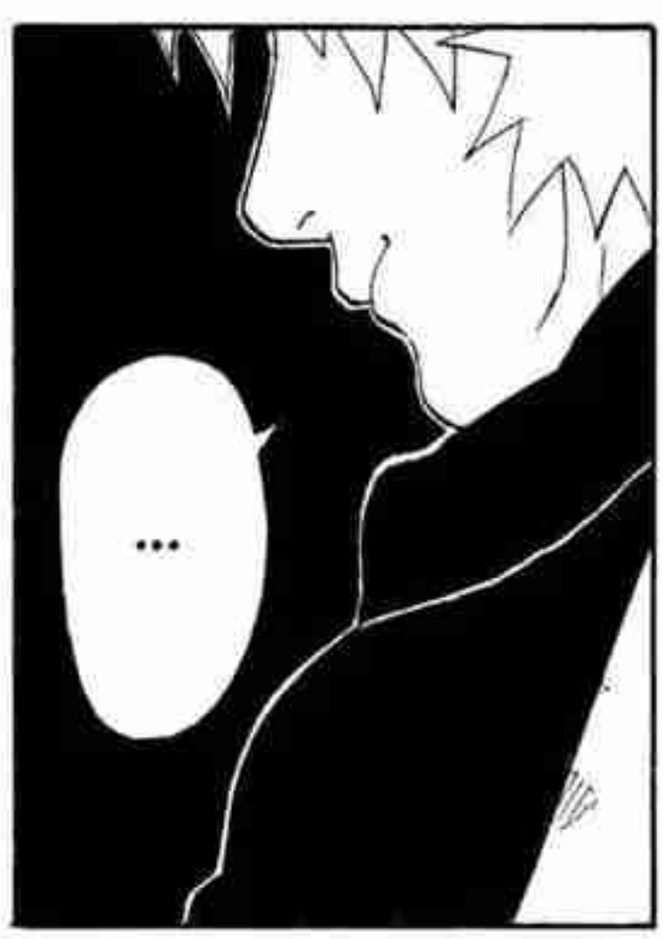
...A GREAT DEBT.


愛
I OWE KONOHA ...

BUT I DIDN'T THINK YOU GUYS WOULD FLIP SIDES THIS FAST.
I HEARD WE MADE UP WITH THE TRAITORS FROM THE LAND OF SAND.


IT WAS JUST ORDERS.
IT'S NOT LIKE WE WANTED TO RAID KONOHA.

THE SAME WAY I WAS ORDERED HERE.

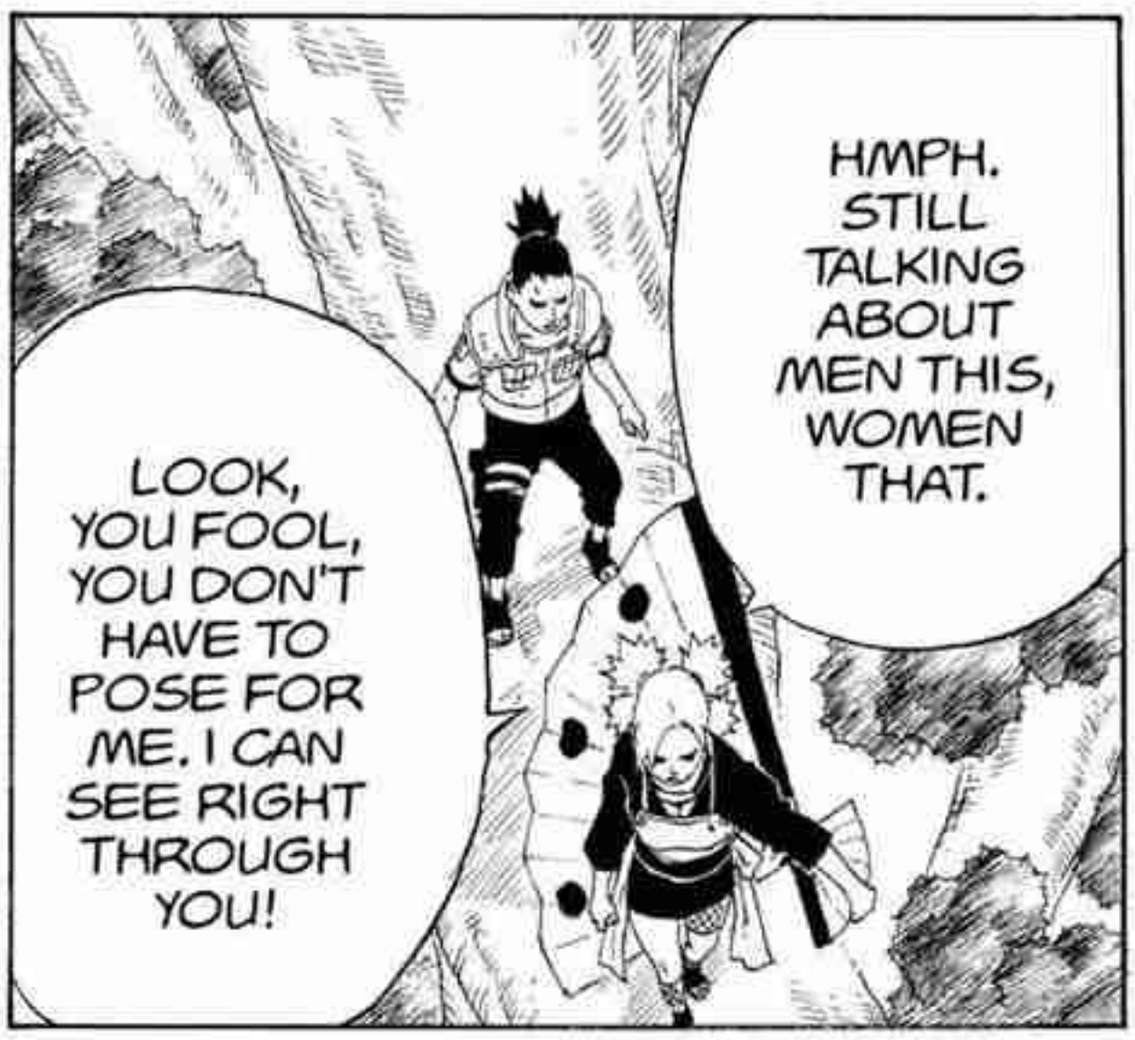

...

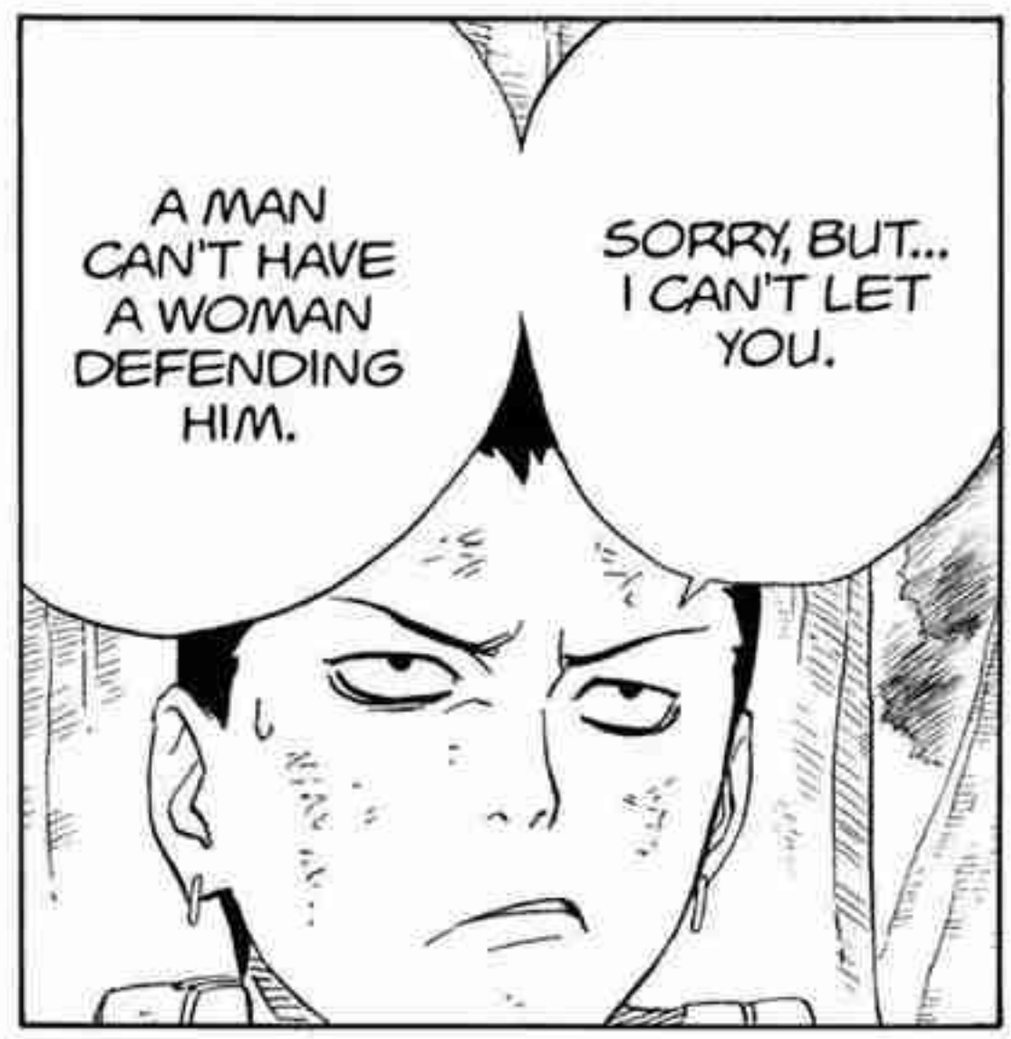
ARE YOU GETTING DUMBER BY THE MINUTE?
BY THE WAY...

THANK GOOD-NESS.
!
AHA... SO THE FIFTH HOKAGE SENT FOR HELP.

I CAN TAKE CARE OF HER, YOU KNOW.

SO YOU WANNA PULL OUT AGAIN?

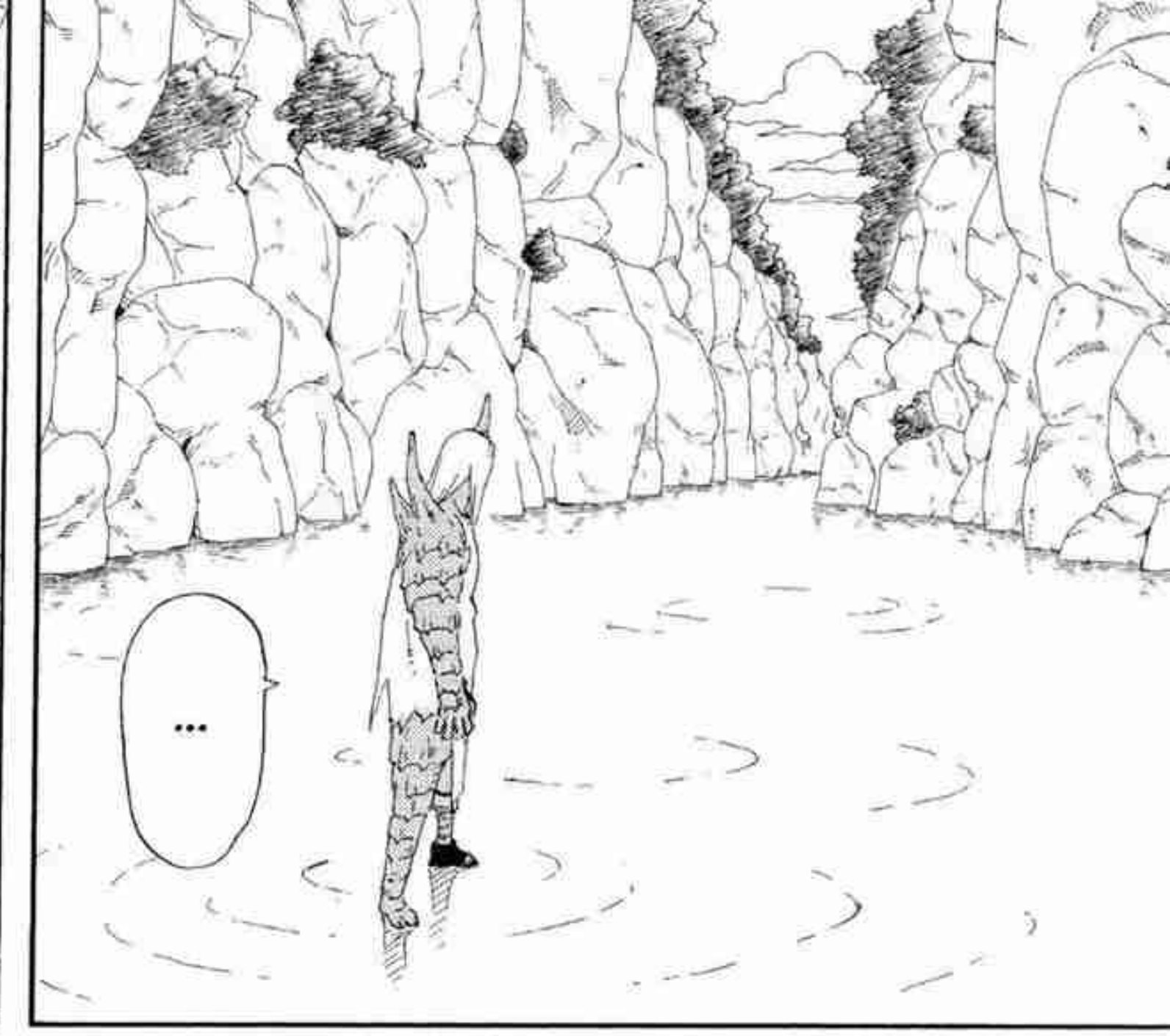




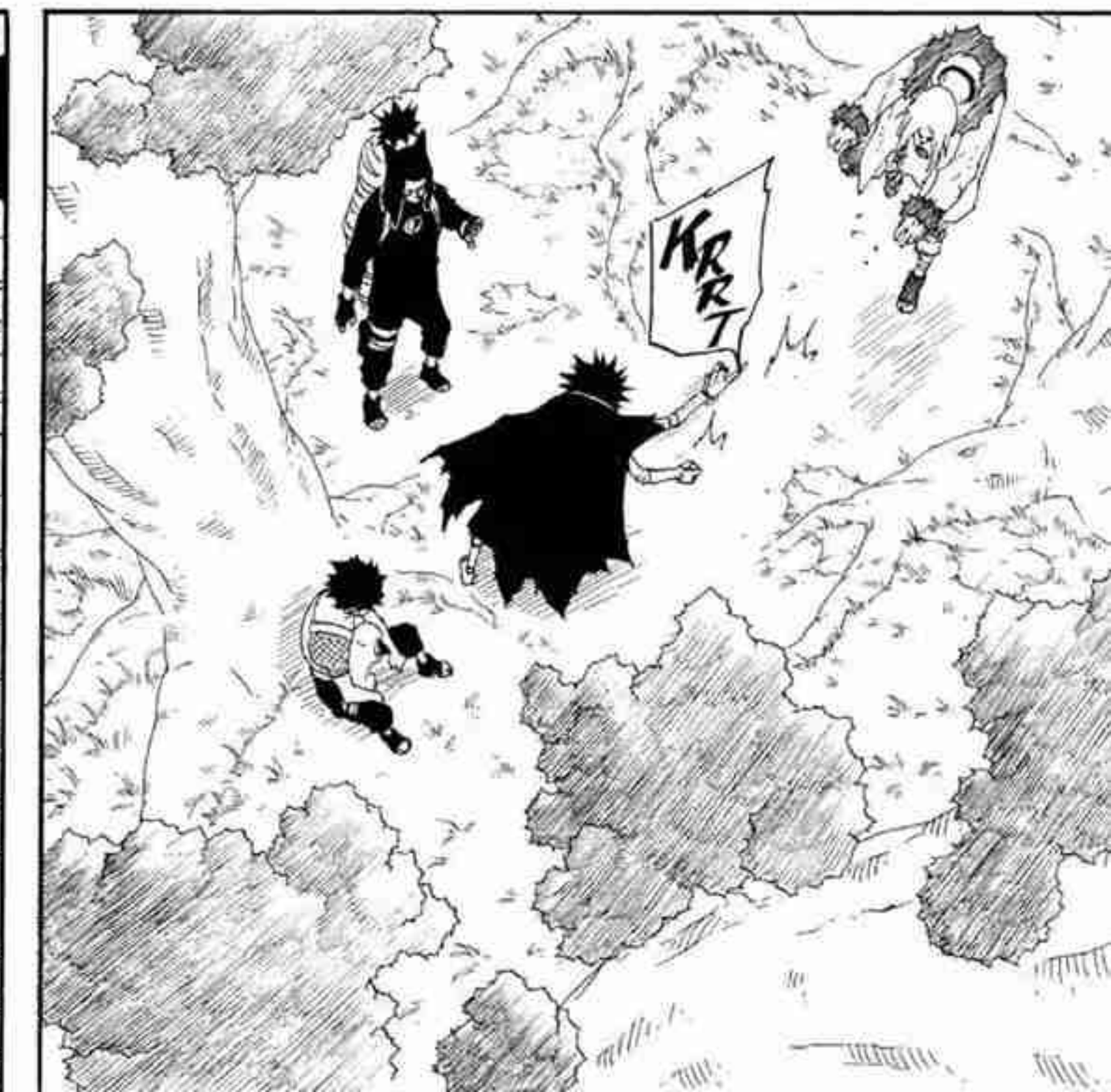
DAI-
KAMAITACHI
NO JUTSU!
CYCLONE
SCYTHE
TECHNIQUE!!
WEEE

READ THIS WAY
SLISH
!!
OFFENSE AND DEFENSE IN ONE MOVE.
SHE DOES HAVE SOME IMPRESSIVE JUTSU.
IT'S NOT JUST BLASTING AWAY THE FLUTE SOUNDS... IT'S ALSO PHYSICALLY DAMAGING THE OPPONENT.
THIS WENCH IS GOING TO BE A PAIN IN THE NECK!!

...YOU BETTER HAVE CAUGHT HIM.
...
AS WE PLANNED, UKON...


...

FSSSH
SHOOM
!!


KRRT

READ THIS WAY
YOU GUYS NEED ALL THE HELP YOU CAN GET.
THE OTHERS WENT AHEAD.
HEY, WEREN'T THERE THREE OF YOU?
A GOLEM, HUH.
SHF
TWIK
!
YOU MORON! THESE CREEPS AREN'T JUST YOUR AVERAGE...
!
BEHIND YOU!!
WOOP

SPA
KA

WHO IS THIS GUY?!

NUTS.
!
I... I CAN'T MOVE!!

READ THIS WAY
FINISH THIS!
SAKON, I'M LEAVING THEM IN YOUR HANDS.

PLAP
MMPF

WATCH OUT! HE'S GONNA ENTER YOUR BODY AND FUSE WITH YOU!!

THAT POSITION...
!!

SHUP

TOO LATE NOW...

?!!

YIKES...
YOU!!

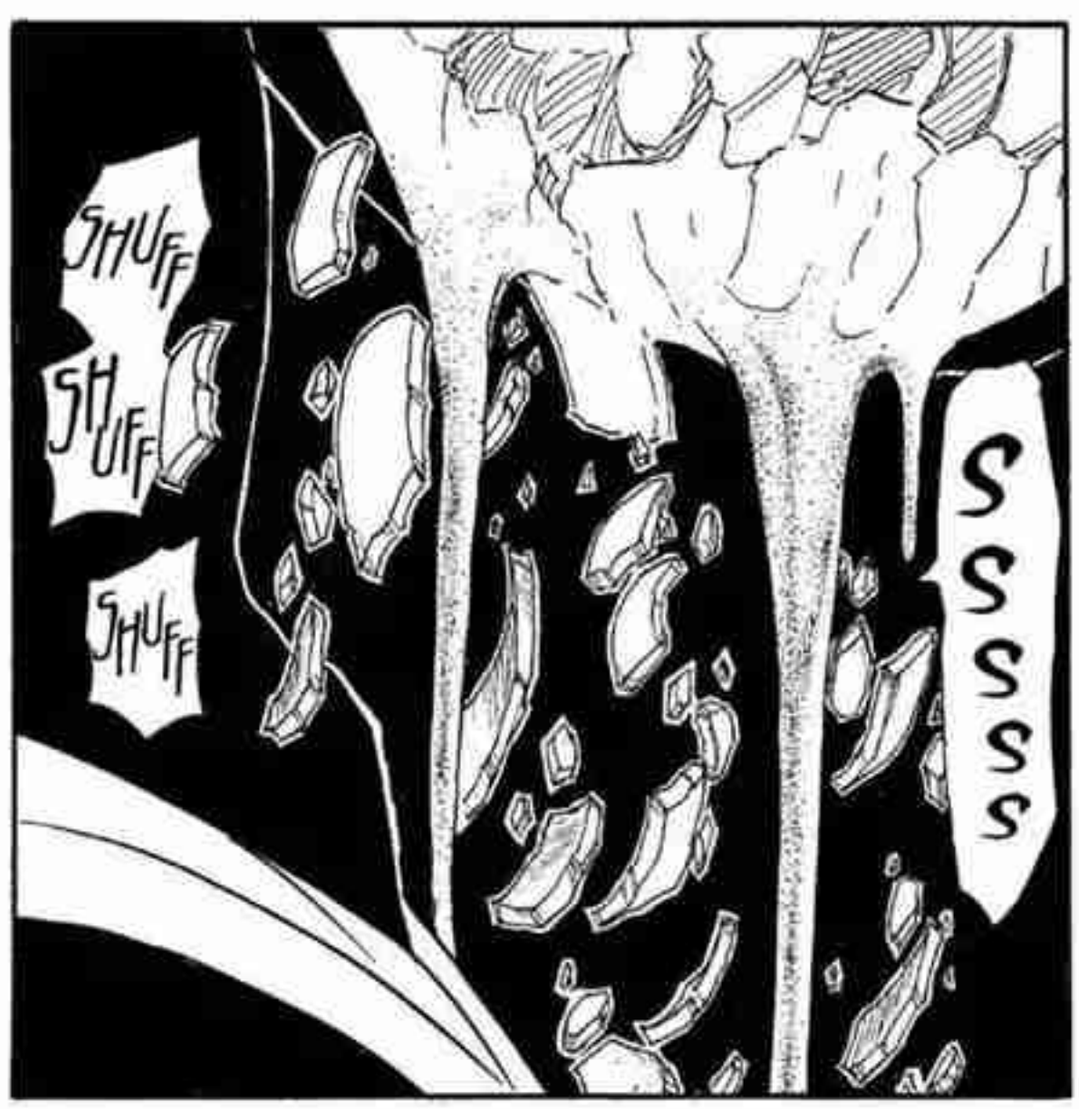
SMIRK

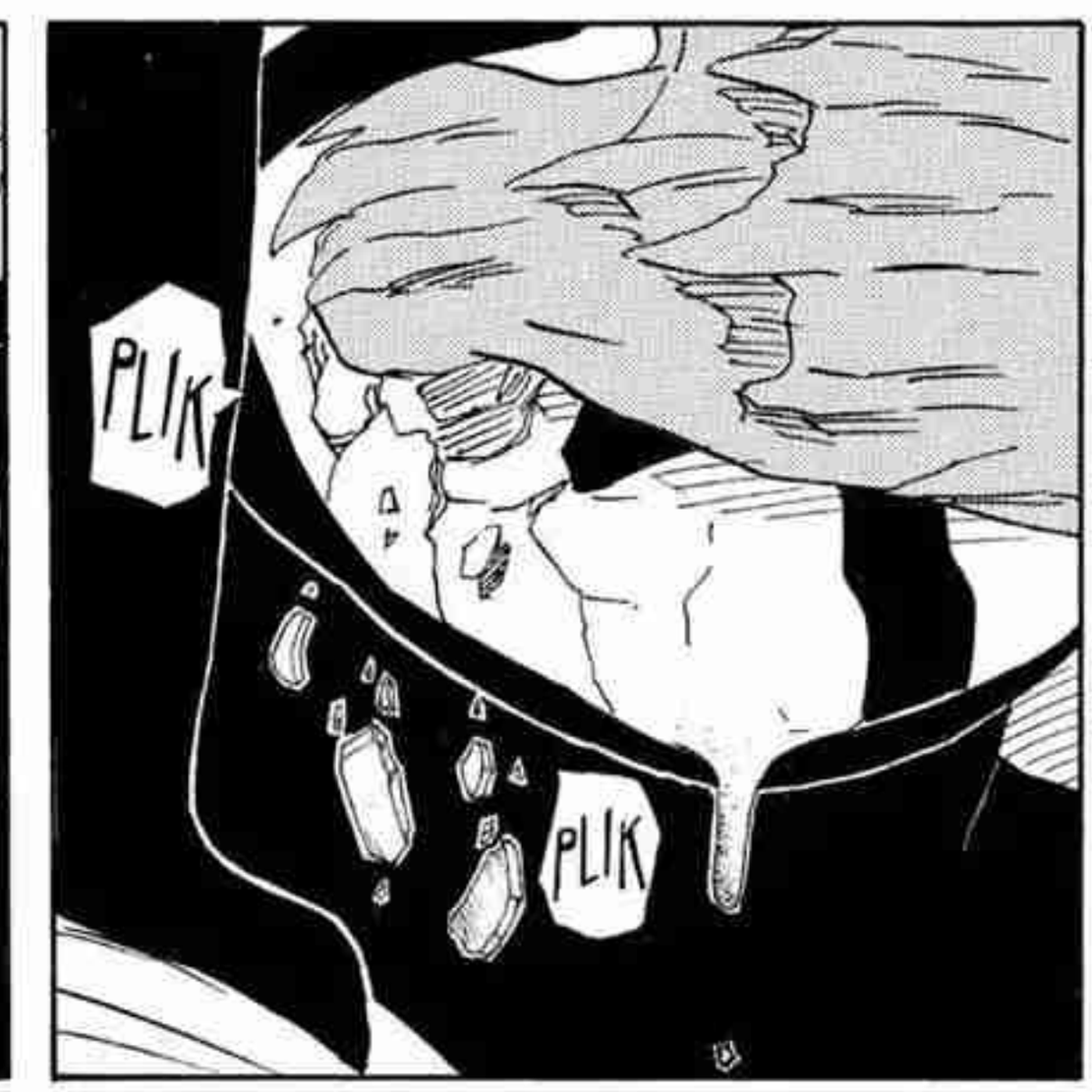
READ
THIS
WAY

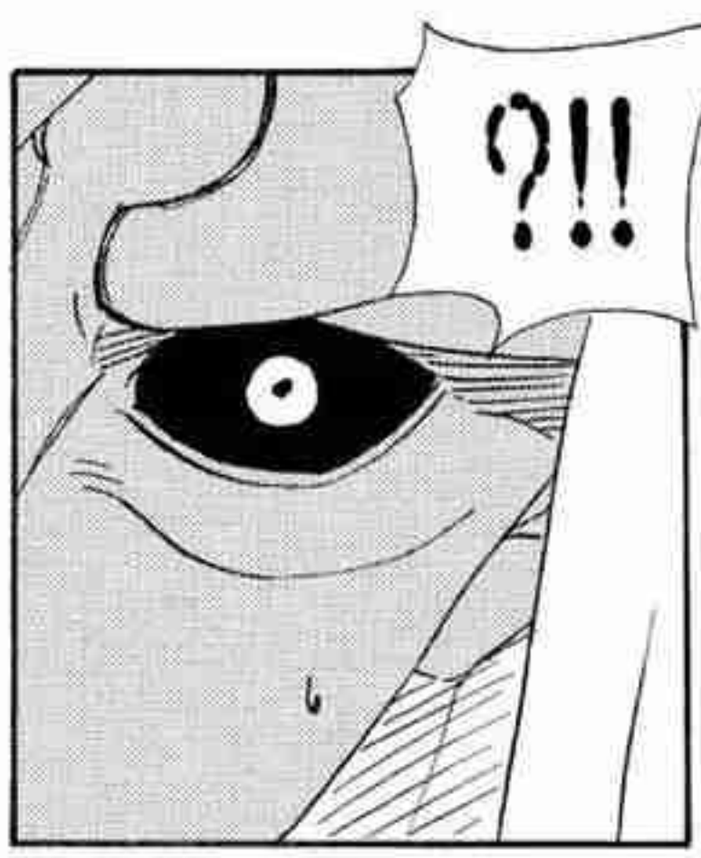
SAKON?! WHAT IS IT?!

TAK

?!


SHUFF
SHUFF
SHUFF
SSSSS

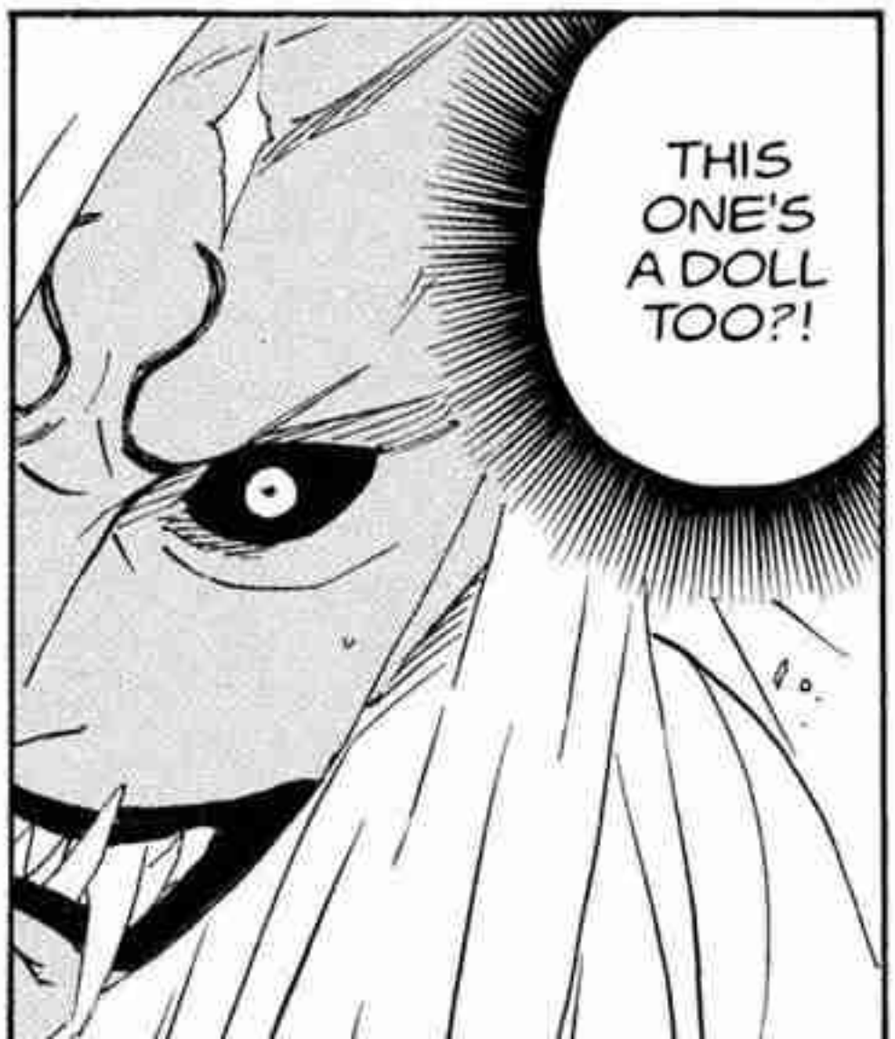

PLIK
PLIK


?!!

?!

?!

!!


THIS ONE'S A DOLL TOO?!

THIS JUTSU OF YOURS... GUESS IT DOESN'T WORK ON A DOLL.
SH RIP

WOMP

IF YOU STRAY TOO CLOSE TO MY KUROARI, THE ANT...

FWUP

LET ME TELL YOU SOMETHING. SAND NINJA AREN'T SO EASILY BRUSHED ASIDE AS LEAF.

GWAH!!

SKLORS

YOU'RE IN A BIND.

BUT NOW THAT HE'S WITH ME, I SURE AS HECK CAN COUNT ON HIM.

HE WAS A TERRIBLE ENEMY...

MMF

?!

THE WORLD OF KISHIMOTO MASASHI
PERSONAL HISTORY:
THE TOO-EMBARRASSING-TO-WRITE-ABOUT STORY, PART 3

THE MORE I ADD TO THIS PERSONAL HISTORY, THE MORE MISERY I RELIVE FROM MY EMBARRASSING PAST. I ASK MYSELF WHETHER I ONLY DREDGE UP ALL THESE STUPID MEMORIES OUT OF A COMPULSION TO FILL IN THE PAGES BETWEEN CHAPTERS. YET STILL I PERSIST. WELL, AT LEAST YOU CAN NEVER SAY I HELD BACK ON YOU AS AN ENTERTAINER.

THE THINGS I'M ABOUT TO DISCLOSE MAY GET A LITTLE INTENSE FOR SOME READERS. STILL, HERE WE GO.

THIS INCIDENT IS WEDGED IN MY BRAIN... IT WAS BACK IN KINDERGARTEN, THE DAY OF THE "POTATO DIGGING TOURNAMENT." THAT AUTUMN, THAT DAY, IN THE MIDST OF HARVESTING SEASON, JUST FOR THAT EVENT, OUR SCHOOL INVITED OUR FAMILIES TO JOIN US. KIDS, PARENTS, TEACHERS, ALL OF US GOT TOGETHER TO HARVEST THE SWEET POTATOES WE'D PLANTED AT A NEARBY FARM. IN THE COUNTRYSIDE, YOU SEE, KINDERGARTENS HOLD THESE HEARTWARMING COMMUNITY FUNCTIONS, INTENDED TO BRING KIDS, PARENTS, AND TEACHERS CLOSER TOGETHER.

I WAS DIGGING AWAY IN HIGH SPIRITS, TELLING MYSELF "I'LL FIND THE BIGGEST POTATO OF ALL, AND SURPRISE EVERYBODY!" AND THEN THERE IT WAS, A MONOLITH AMONGST POTATOES. IN MY DELIGHT, I STARTED DIGGING LIKE A STARVING MAN. MIND YOU, FOR ALL MY HASTE I WAS CAREFUL NOT TO BREAK THE ROOT. AND THEN THERE I WAS, CLUTCHING A GIANT POTATO.

IN UNISON, EVERYBODY SCREAMED: "WOW!!" AND "THAT'S HUGE!" AND SO ON. I WAS IN ANOTHER WORLD. SO THEN... I DON'T KNOW WHY I DID THIS, BUT I STARTED RUNNING AND ROLLING AROUND THE FIELD, GRASPING MY PRECIOUS POTATO. THEN THE THOUGHT HIT ME: "I GOTTA SHOW MOM THIS POTATO!" SO I GLANCED AROUND FOR HER AND REALIZED SHE WASN'T THERE. SHE WAS ACTUALLY DOWN AT MY TWIN BROTHER'S PLOT. SEE, THE FARM WAS TERRACED, AND HIS PLOT WAS IN A FIELD BELOW. SO I PELTED STRAIGHT TOWARD HER, SPRINTING FROM FIELD TO FIELD, HOPPING DOWN THE TERRACES AND EVERYTHING.

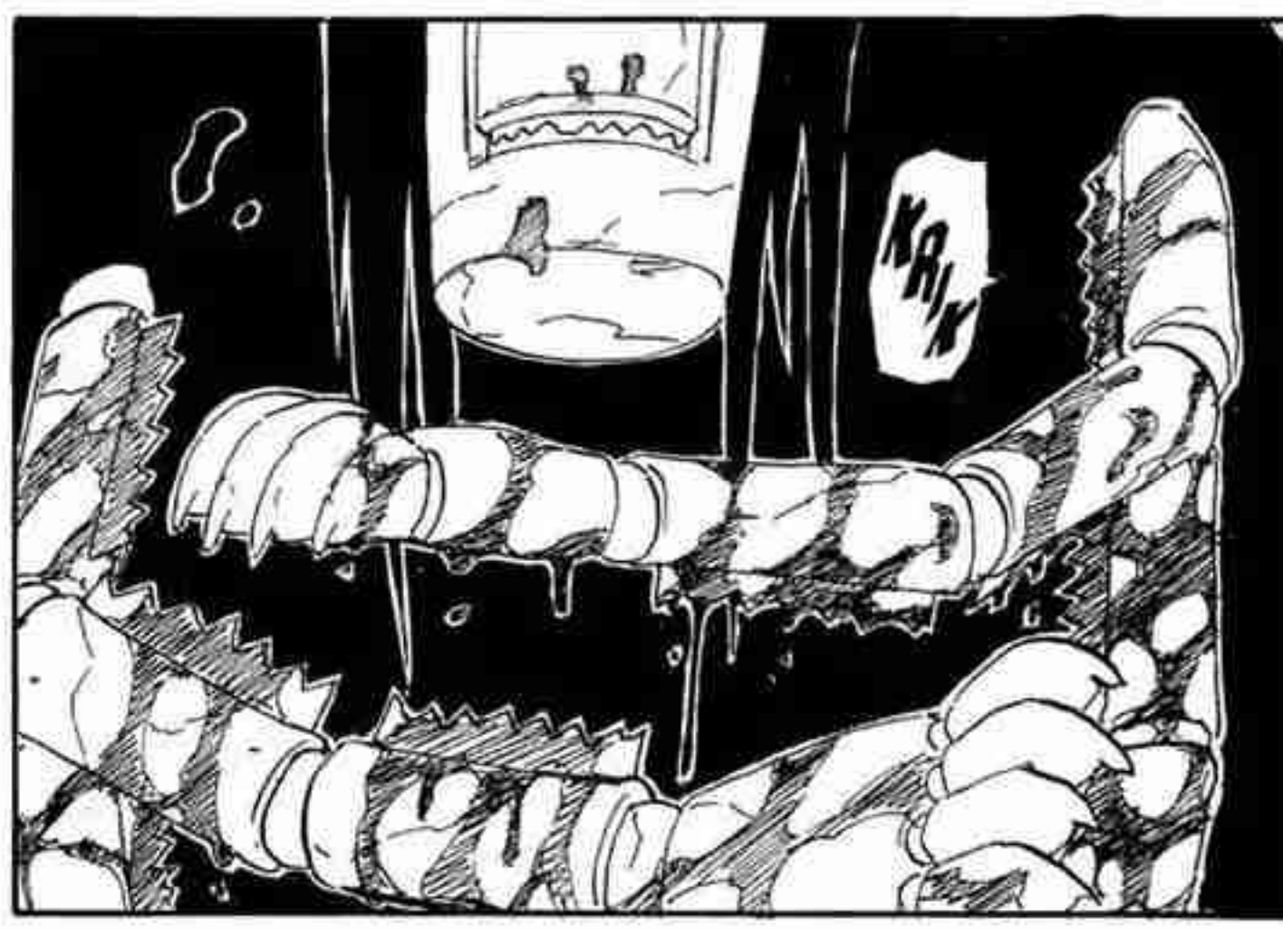
AND THAT'S WHEN IT HAPPENED. I WAS IN SUCH A HURRY I WASN'T LOOKING, BUT IN THE LOWER FIELD, IN THE FIVE SQUARE METER AREA WHERE I WAS DUE TO LAND, WAS A HEAPING PILE OF A TYPICAL RURAL ARTIFACT...

AS YOU MAY HAVE SURMISED, IT WAS, YES, A MOUNTAIN OF **COW MANURE**!

-- TO BE CONTINUED --

Number
214:
Retreat...
zz

WHU MP



READ THIS WAY
FOOSH
!
ZWUR
ZWUR ZWURR
?!
SHK
SLUR
!

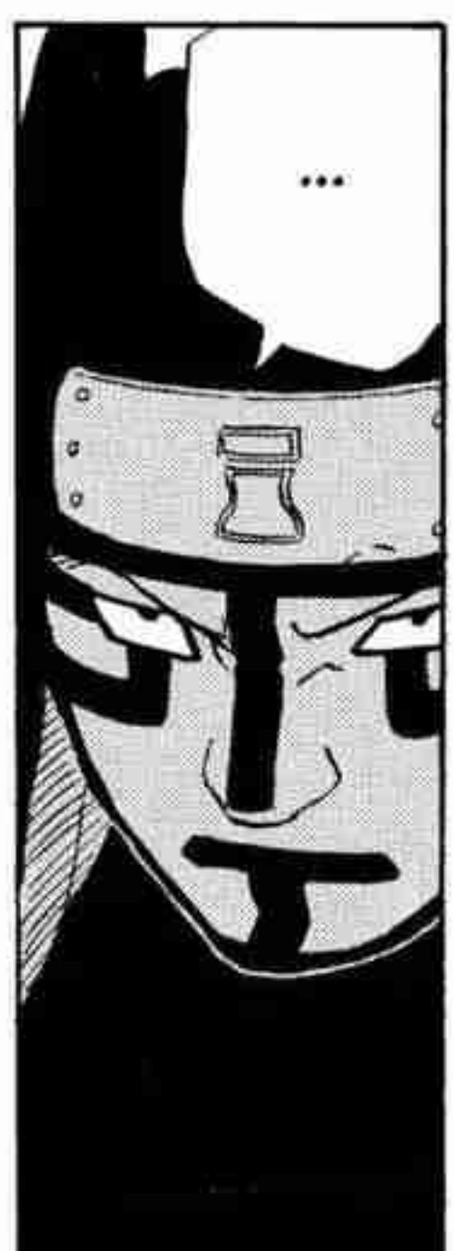
HERE, LEMME REST A BIT.
SLURGE
I LET MY GUARD DOWN.
OWW...
SHAAK
SSLLURRR
YOU'RE PATHETIC.

THAT'S THEIR POWER.
WHAT'S WITH THEM?

ZWUR
...

ZWURR
HE MAY HAVE CAUGHT YOU OFF GUARD...
BUT STILL, YOU CONCEDE DEFEAT TO SOME STUPID PUPPET?!

HEH. MY STOMACH WOUND'S HEALED OVER.


...

THAT TOY'S NOT ENOUGH TO TAKE US DOWN.
LOOK... HE'S NOT THAT STRONG, HE'S NOT THAT FAST...

I AM RUNNING LOW ON CHAKRA...

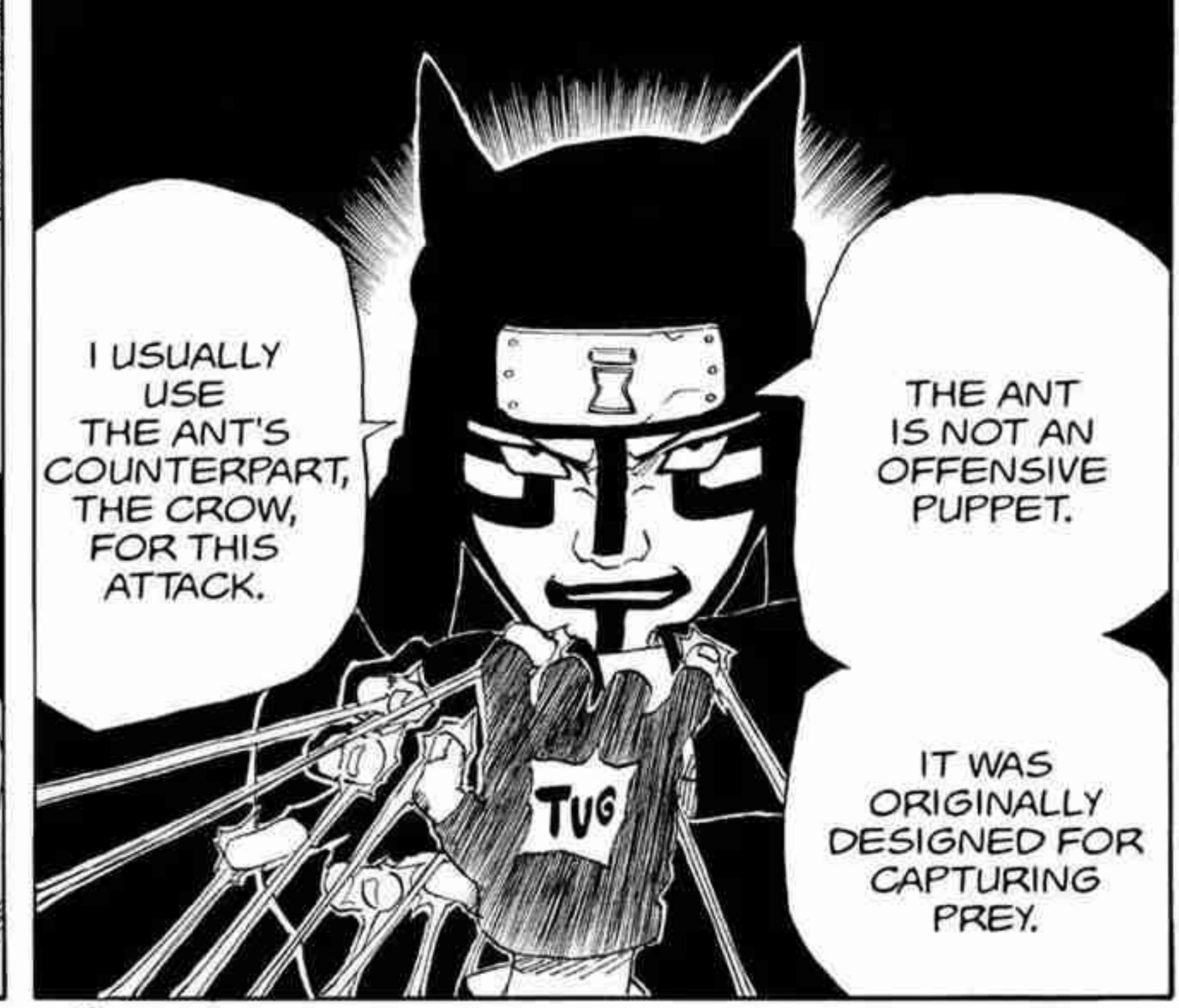
BUT I'VE GOT ENOUGH TO SHRED THESE TWO.

READ THIS WAY
TUG
AND LET THEM THINK ME A COWARD?
WHAT, BACK DOWN NOW?
TUG
!!
!
SHOOM
SHOOM
SHOOM

SHOOM
SHOOM
SHOOM
WHOA!!

URK!!

?!


I USUALLY USE THE ANT'S COUNTERPART, THE CROW, FOR THIS ATTACK.
TUG
THE ANT IS NOT AN OFFENSIVE PUPPET.
IT WAS ORIGINALLY DESIGNED FOR CAPTURING PREY.

SPA
KK

YEEG!

K'SHAK
K'SHAK
K'SHAK

BAM
LET ME OUTTA HERE!!

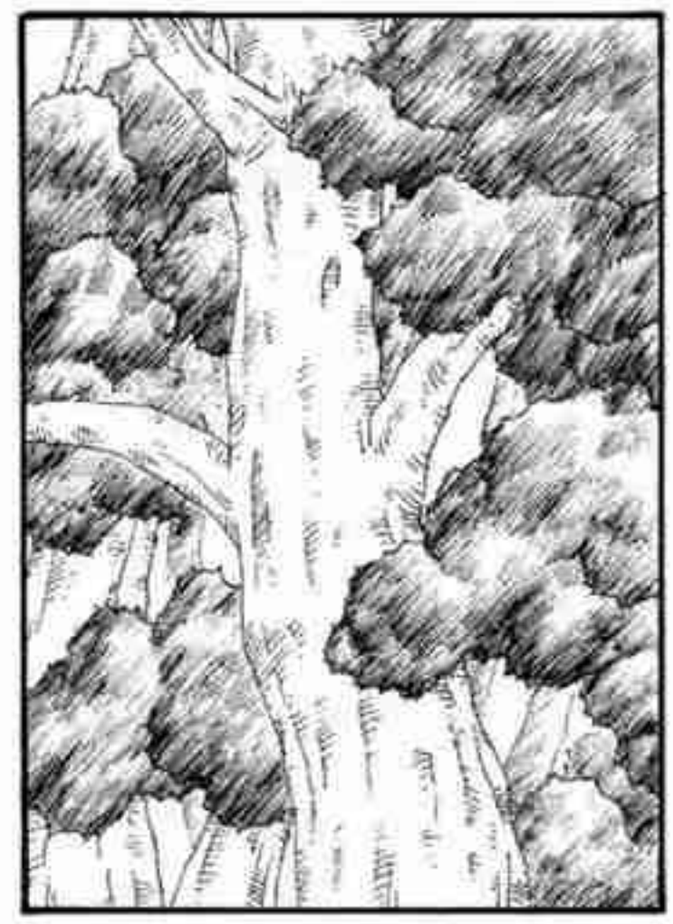
...MY VERY OWN PUPPET SHOW!
I GIVE YOU...

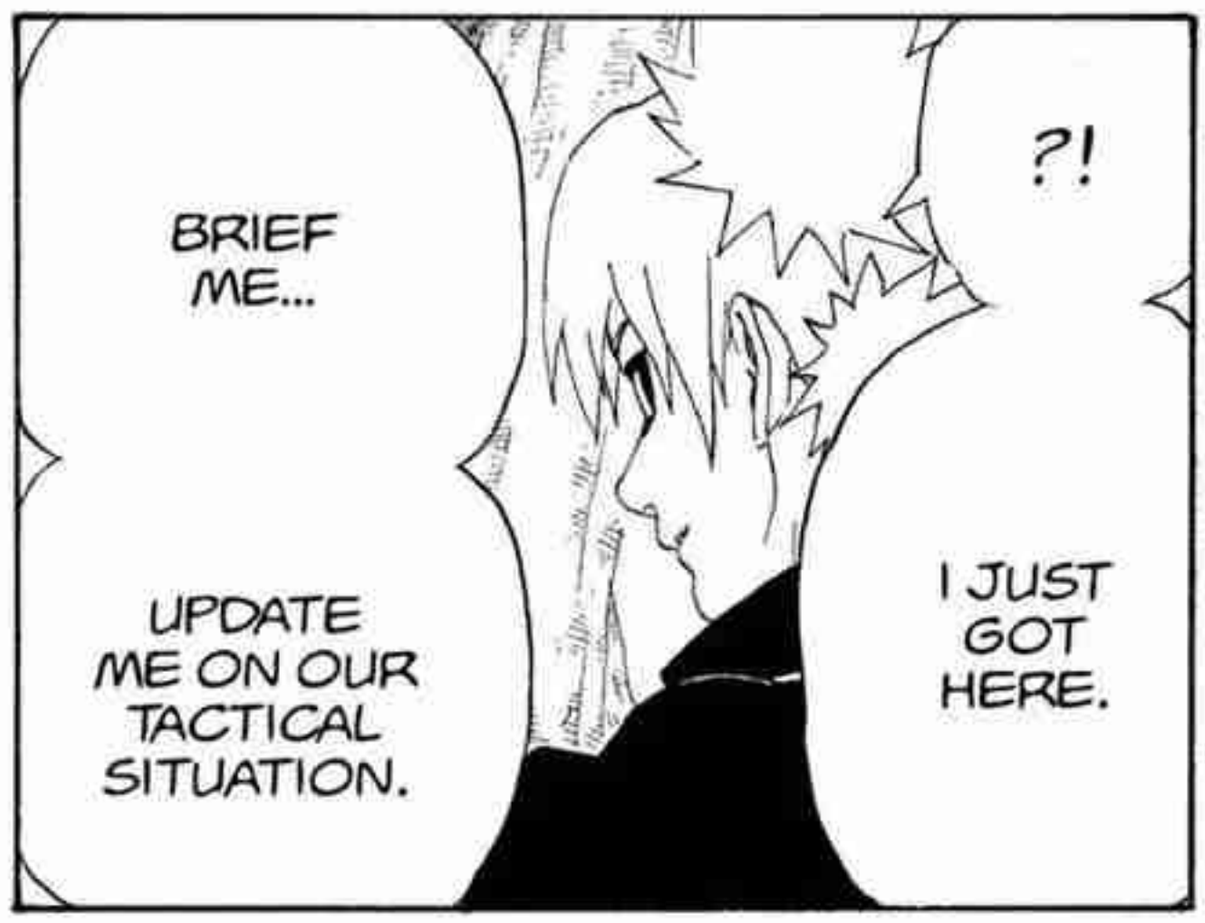
WO
THE ART OF THE IRON MAIDEN!
MP

READ THIS WAY
CHUFF
GLUK
SHLUK
SHOOM
CHUFF
GUH... GUAAAH!!
CHURK
SHZUK
...
DRIP
...
...

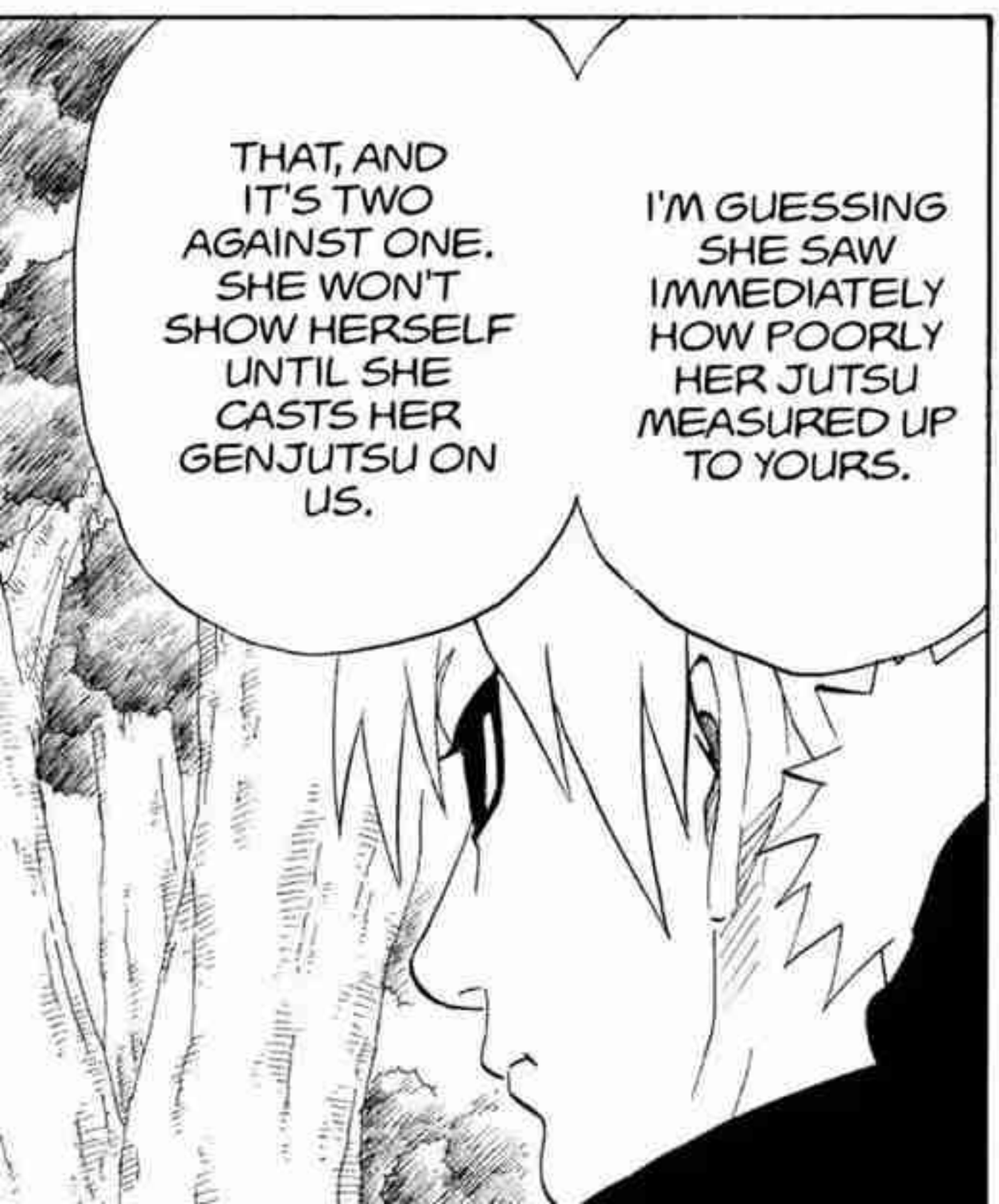
FINIS.

WITH HER TAIL BETWEEN HER LEGS?
SHE'S RUN OFF...




BRIEF ME...
UPDATE ME ON OUR TACTICAL SITUATION.
?!
I JUST GOT HERE.

THAT'S NOT HER WAY. SHE'S AROUND.
NO...


THAT, AND IT'S TWO AGAINST ONE. SHE WON'T SHOW HERSELF UNTIL SHE CASTS HER GENJUTSU ON US.
I'M GUESSING SHE SAW IMMEDIATELY HOW POORLY HER JUTSU MEASURED UP TO YOURS.

BASICALLY, SHE'S YOUR TYPICAL GENJUTSU-STYLE LONG-RANGE FIGHTER.
WELL... FIRST, HER BASIC APPROACH IS TO SPELLBIND HER ENEMIES WITH THE SOUND OF HER FLUTE...
THEN WHILE THEY'RE UNDER THE SPELL, SHE JUMPS THEM.

THEY ACT UPON AND BEWITCH YOUR SIGHT, YOUR HEARING...

... YOUR SMELL, TASTE, AND TOUCH.

YEAH.

SEE, MOST GENJUTSU WORK ON THE FIVE SENSES.

SOUND... HUH?

WE'VE NO IDEA WHEN OR WHERE SHE'LL UNLOAD IT ON US.

NOT ONLY CAN SHE KEEP HER DISTANCE, BUT STAY AS CLOAKED AS SHE PLEASES.

THE ONES BASED ON HEARING ARE THE MOST PROBLEMATIC.

...

AWWG...

WE'RE ALREADY UNDER THE INFLUENCE OF HER GENJUTSU.

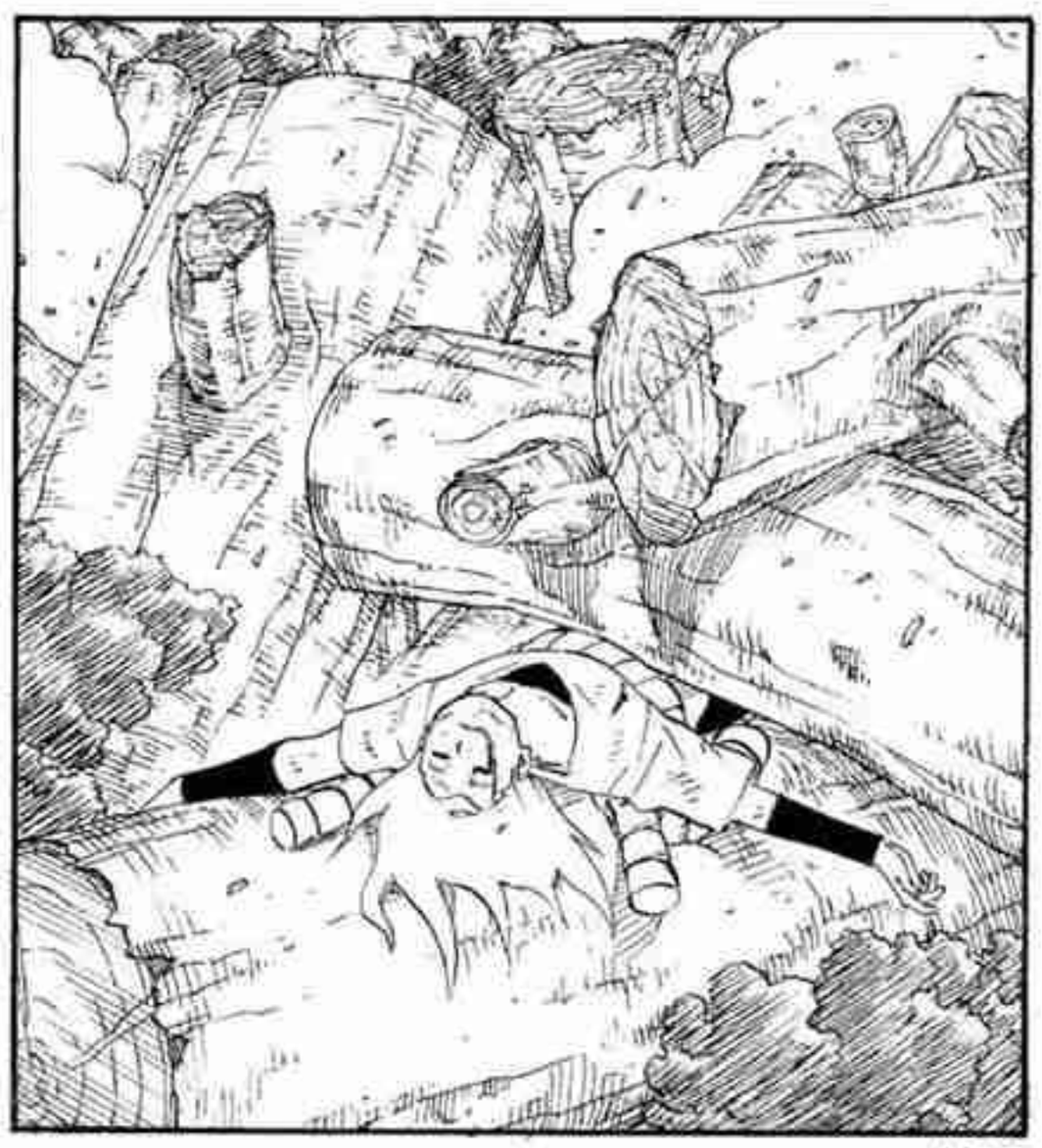
SNAP

BY THE TIME WE PINPOINT HER FROM THE SOUND...

READ THIS WAY
WE SHOULD RETREAT FOR NOW, AND...
IF WE STAY HERE, SOONER OR LATER WE'LL BE CORNERED.
DID ANYONE ASK YOU FOR ADVICE?!
I ASKED YOU THE SITUATION. THAT'S ALL.
FACING SOMEONE LIKE HER IS FOOLISH WITHOUT THE SUPPORT OF GUYS LIKE KIBA OR NEJI... SOMEONE WITH KEEN DETECTION.
WE'RE IN A HEAP OF TROUBLE, IF YOU ASK ME.
THROB
THROB
SHE'S IN FOR A DOOZY.
IF SHE THINKS SHE'S SAFE...
SKLITCH
CAMPED OUT JUST INSIDE THE RANGE OF HEARING...
...?!
CHIP
DON'T UNDER-ESTIMATE ME.
FWOSH
KUCHIYOSE! SUMMONING!

KIRIKIRI-MAI! BLADE DANCE!
SLASH!!

READ THIS WAY
WHAT?
!
SHF
ALL RIGHT, FAR ENOUGH. LET THE GENJUTSU BEGIN...
SLUSH
CHOK
CHOK
?!!
!
...

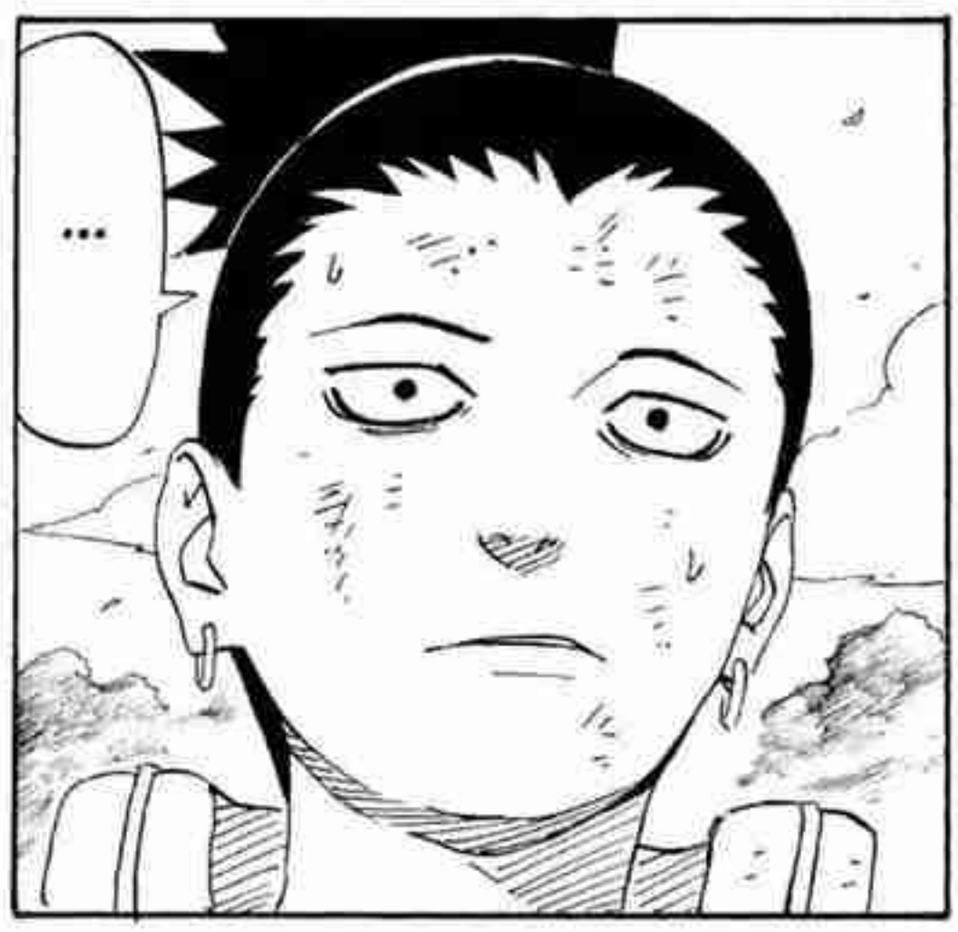


AND SCARIER THAN MY MOM...
SUBTLE AS A RHINO...

...
ALL OVER.
SEE?

WHAT D'YA THINK?
TEE HEE

BUT, WELL... I GUESS THIS TIME I GOTTA BE GRATEFUL.


...

THE WORLD OF KISHIMOTO MASASHI
PERSONAL HISTORY:
THE TOO-EMBARRASSING-TO-WRITE-ABOUT STORY, PART 4

THE IMAGE OF THAT SCENE IS ACID-ETCHED INTO MY MIND. I REMEMBER MY THOUGHTS, HOVERING THERE IN MIDAIR. WHAT WOULD HAPPEN IF I LOST MY BALANCE? OH NO. DON'T LET ME FALL DOWN. THAT'S IT, FORGET THE LEGS. IF I JUST LAND WITH MY UPPER BODY STRAIGHT, LIKE A GYMNAST...

ANYWAY, NEVER MIND THE POTATO. I TOSSED IT ASIDE. **SQUELCH**. IT HIT THE MOUND FIRST. HEARING THAT SOUND GAVE ME THE RESOLVE I NEEDED. **SQUISH SMUSSH!** BOTH MY LEGS, PLANTED IN THE DUNG! IT WAS DEEPER THAN I HAD ENVISIONED. BUT ACTUALLY, THAT WAS A GODSEND. CEMENTED KNEE-DEEP, I MANAGED TO MAINTAIN MY BALANCE.

INSTEAD OF SURPRISING EVERYBODY WITH MY PRIZE POTATO, I WOUND UP STIRRING THEM IN A DIFFERENT WAY.

AND THEN CAME THE MISERY. I CALLED TO A NEARBY CLASSMATE FOR HELP. HE RAN TO THE NEAREST TEACHER, SCREAMING FULL BLAST: "MASASHI'S BURIED IN POO!" I'LL NEVER FORGET WHAT HAPPENED NEXT... THE TEACHER REFUSED TO HELP ME. I GUESS SHE WAS AVERSE TO RURAL ARTIFACTS. TO MY RELIEF AND HER CREDIT, MY MOTHER THEN CAME TO THE RESCUE, LIFTING ME OUT OF MY PREDICAMENT WITHOUT HESITATION. IN THAT MOMENT I LEARNED AWE FOR THE LOVE OF A MOTHER.

TO THIS DAY WHEN A YAM CROSSES MY PATH, IT BRINGS ME BACK TO THAT EVENT. AND NOW THE MORAL (IN TWO PARTS): NO GOOD EVER COMES FROM BEING CAUGHT UP WITH THINGS; AND WHEN IT COMES TO IT, MOTHERS ARE BRAVE!

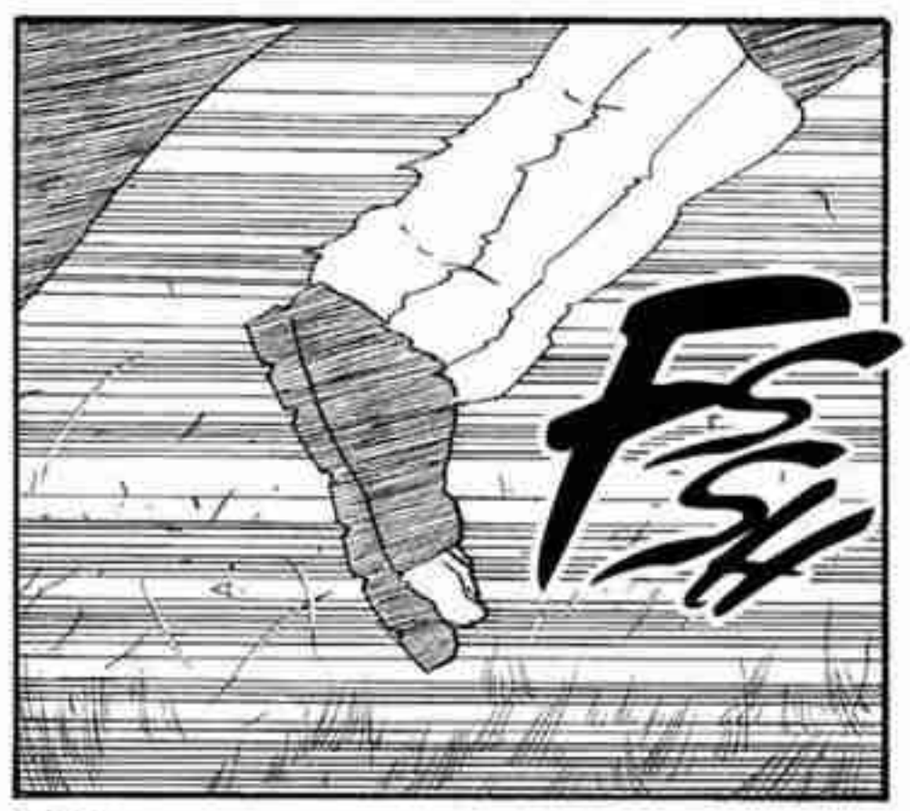
Number 215: Gaara of the Sand

SHF
...
DRUP

I'LL HANDLE THIS.

!

愛



FLOMP

ARGH!!

SWUP

...

SSS

I'LL HANDLE THIS.

SHK

SHK

!

LIKE YOU SAW, HE FIRES THEM OR JUTS THEM OUT OF HIS BODY.

IT'S AS AMAZING AS IT IS DISTURBING!!

HE ATTACKS WITH HIS BONES!

SO AS THE NAME SUGGESTS, YOU ARE *OF THE SAND.*

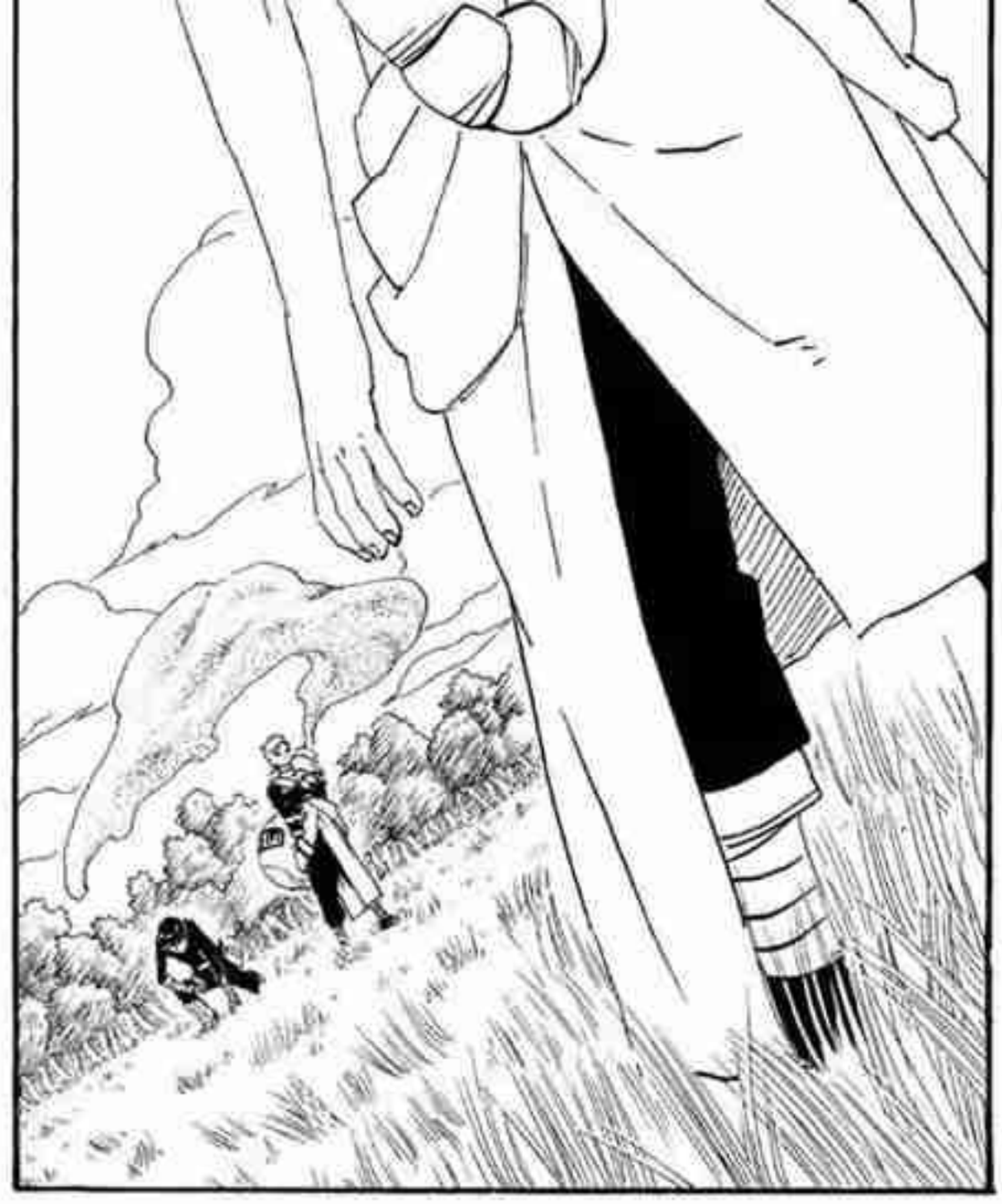
GAARA OF THE SAND...

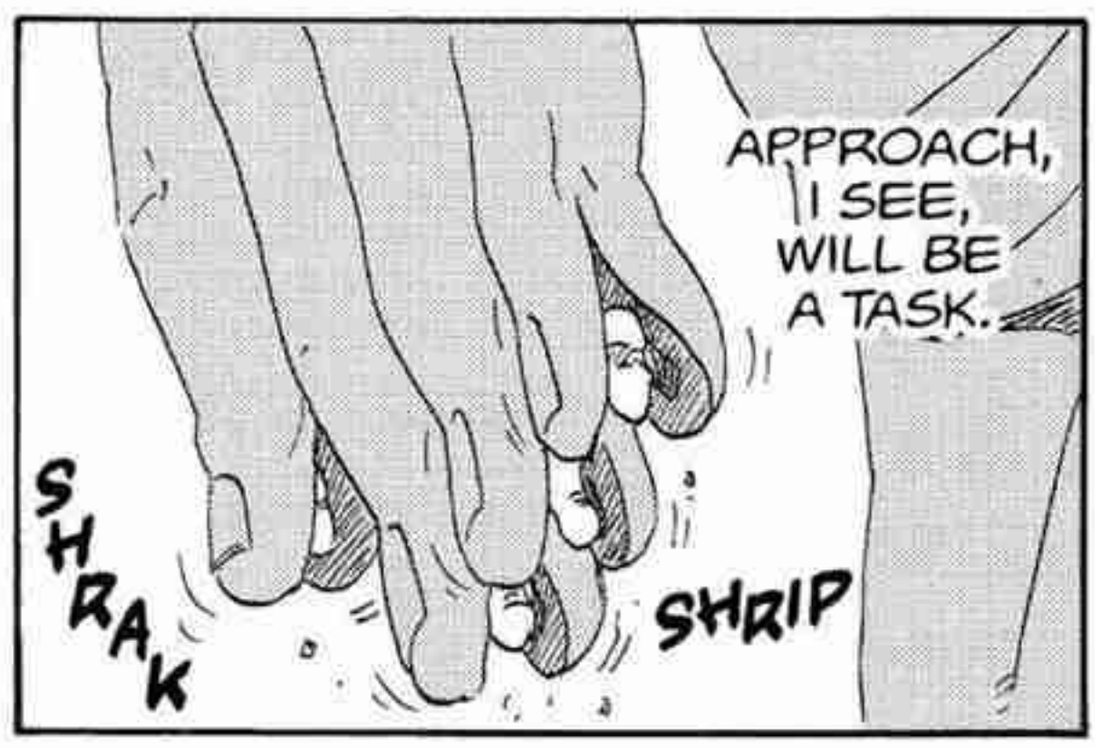
SLURR

SLUR

愛

SSS





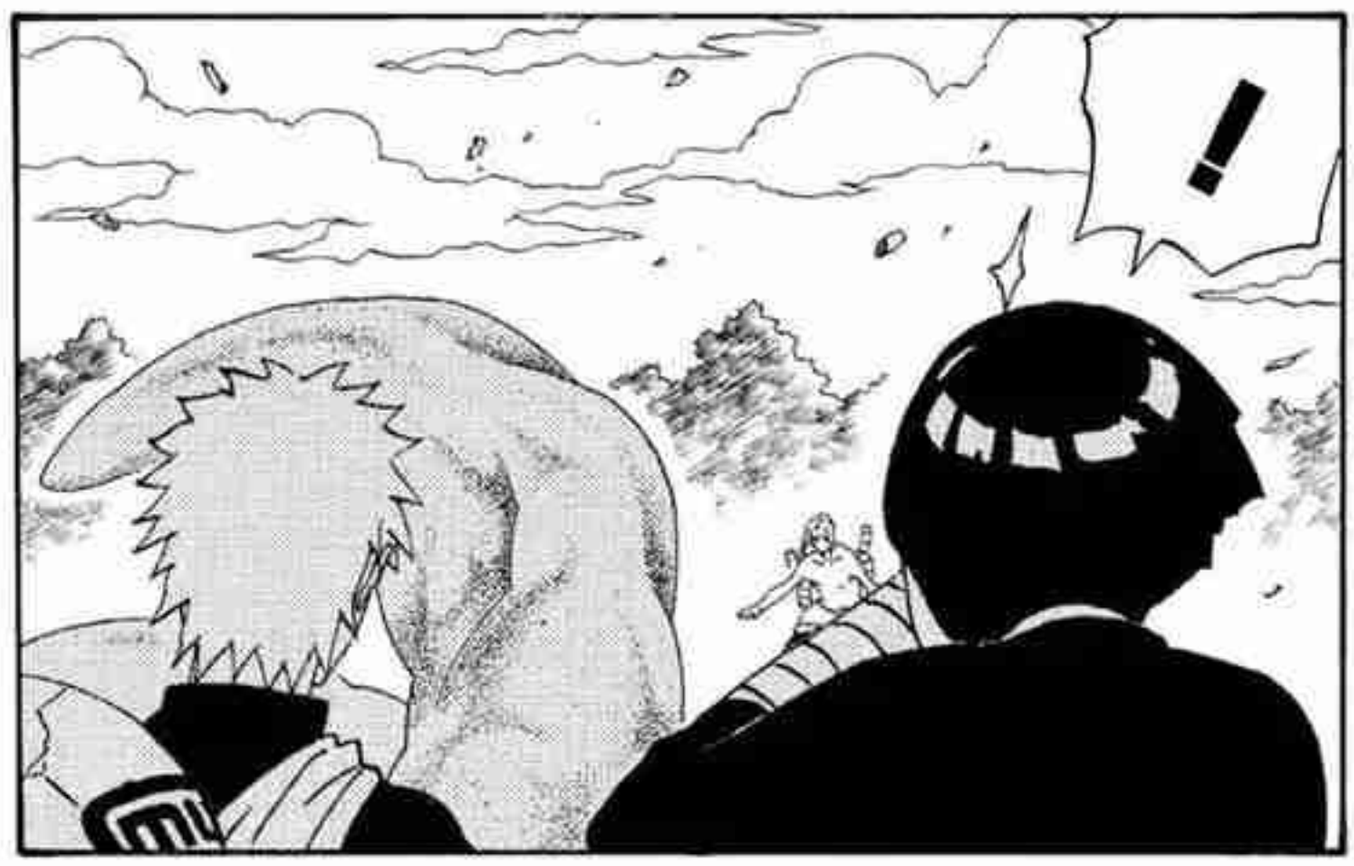
THIS MAN IS...NO MELEE FIGHTER.

THE SAND DEFENDS HIM LIKE A REEF...

READ THIS WAY

KRA K

HE'S A MASTER.
THERE'S NO WASTE TO HIS MOVEMENT.
!!


!

FSSH

TUP

WOOP
SHOOM

TAK
TAK
TAK

WOOM
SH

SUNA SHIGURE! SAND SHOWER!!

RELIANT ONLY ON SAND.
A FOOLISH STAGE NAME...
AND BETRAYED BY THE SIZE OF HIS STORE.
SHF

BUT THE SAND IN HIS CONTROL MUST BE LIMITED TO WHAT'S IN THAT GOURD.
OFFENSE AND DEFENSE IN ONE...
POSSH

SHUUSSSK
!
WHAT A ONE-TRICK PONY.

?!

SHISH

SHISH

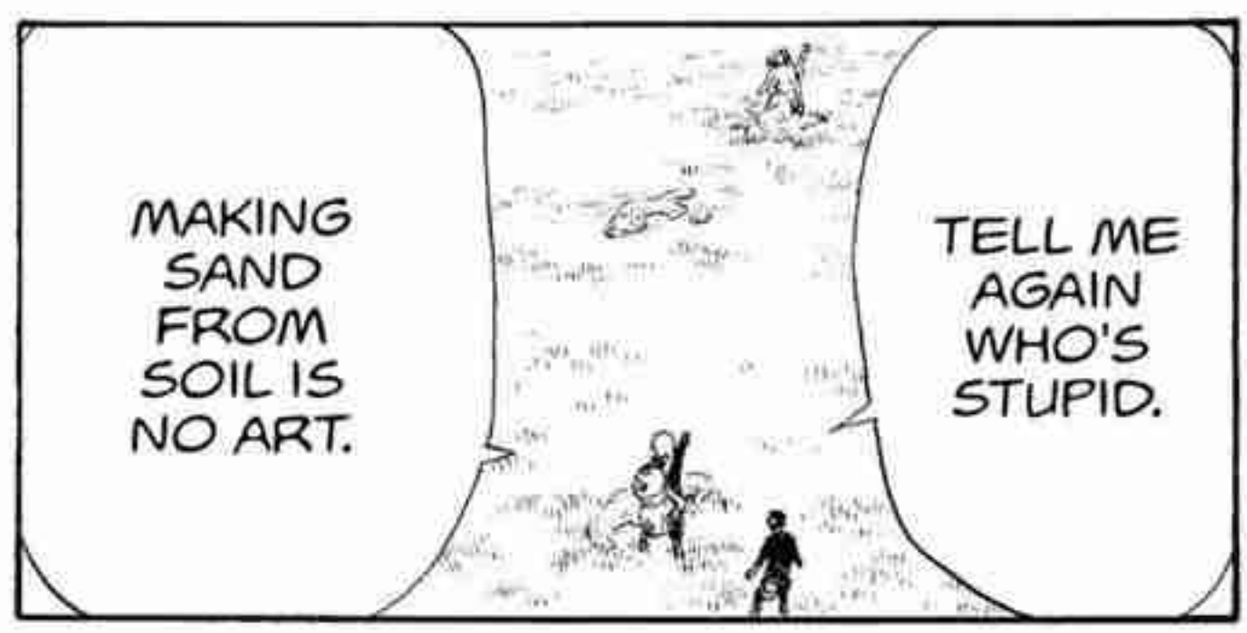
...!

I CAN DO ANYTHING.

SO LONG AS I HAVE SAND...

SHF

PAK PAK PAK PAK !!



SPUK SPUK
愛
SABAKU-SÔSÔ! IMPLODING SAND FUNERAL!!
SPUK
SPUK
RIK

READ THIS WAY
PUM PUM
...
愛
SLAAAK
MMF
SLURK
!

HE'S CERTAINLY A NUISANCE.
MORE BONES, HUH? HE'S A REAL FREAK, ISN'T HE...

WITHOUT THIS LAYER I CREATED UNDERNEATH MY SKIN, I WOULD HAVE BEEN DEAD MEAT FOR SURE.
THAT PRES-SURE WAS A FEAT.

AND YET YOUR SAND WON'T HOLD ME TWICE.
I UNDERES-TIMATED YOU...

SHRK
SHRK
SHRK
SHRK
SHRK

TUMP

!

BUFF BOFF FWIP BOFF BOFF BOFF B

CHA FOOF

GAH!!
SWASH
HSSS
SWSS
SWORSH

SWASSH

SABAKU TAISÔ! TOTAL SAND FUNERAL!!

JARUK

WHOA...!

HE'S EVEN STRONGER THAN WHEN I FOUGHT HIM...
WOW... WHAT A GUY...

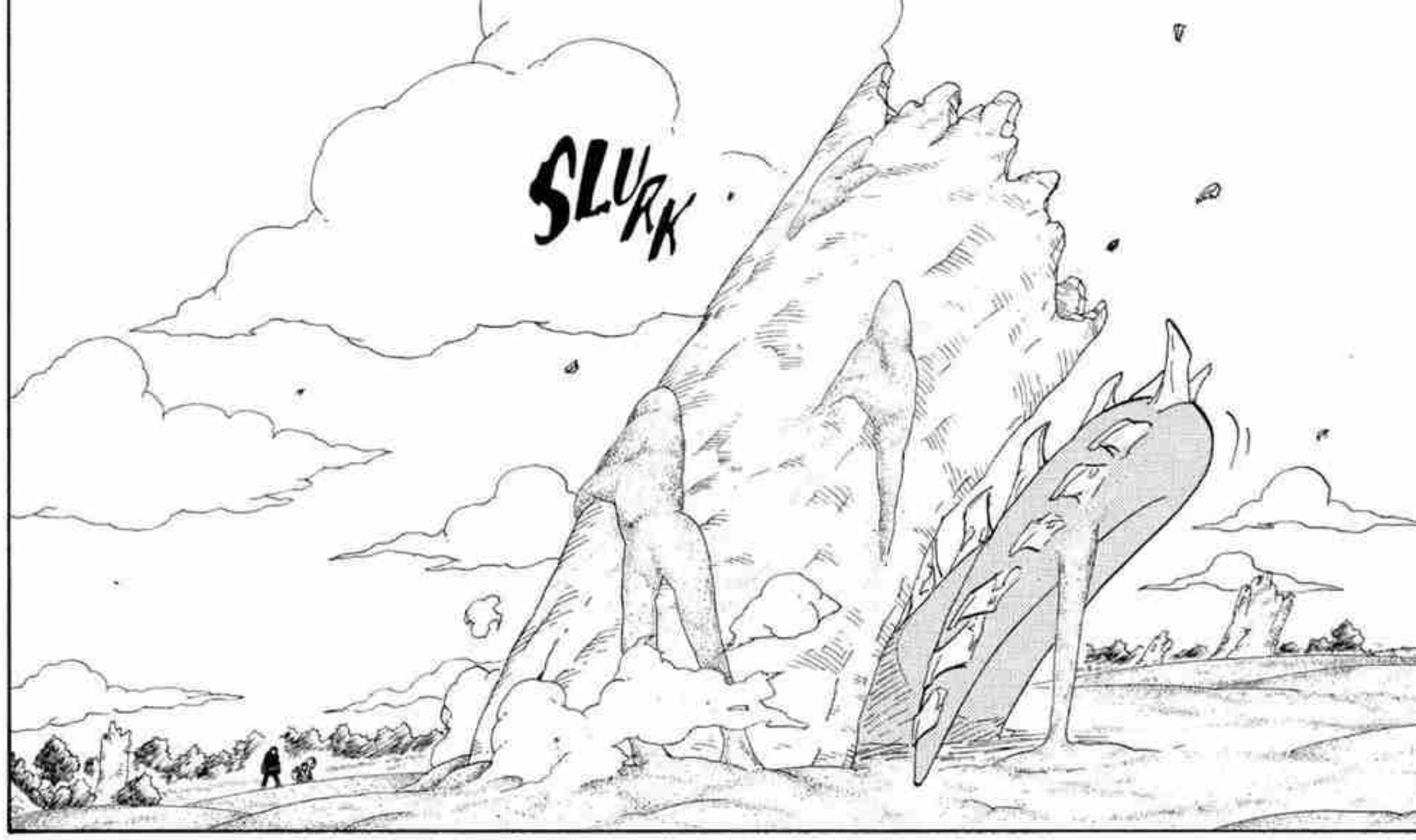
愛
...

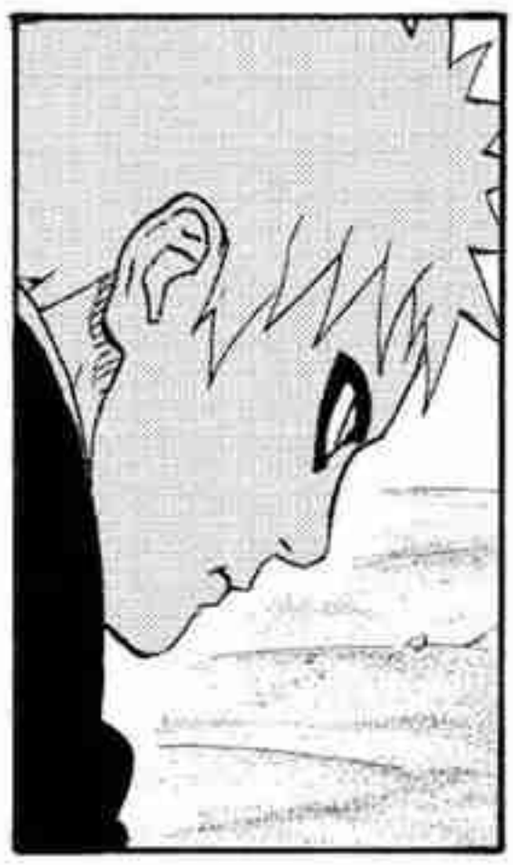
...?!

HUH?!
WON'T HE EVER GIVE UP?

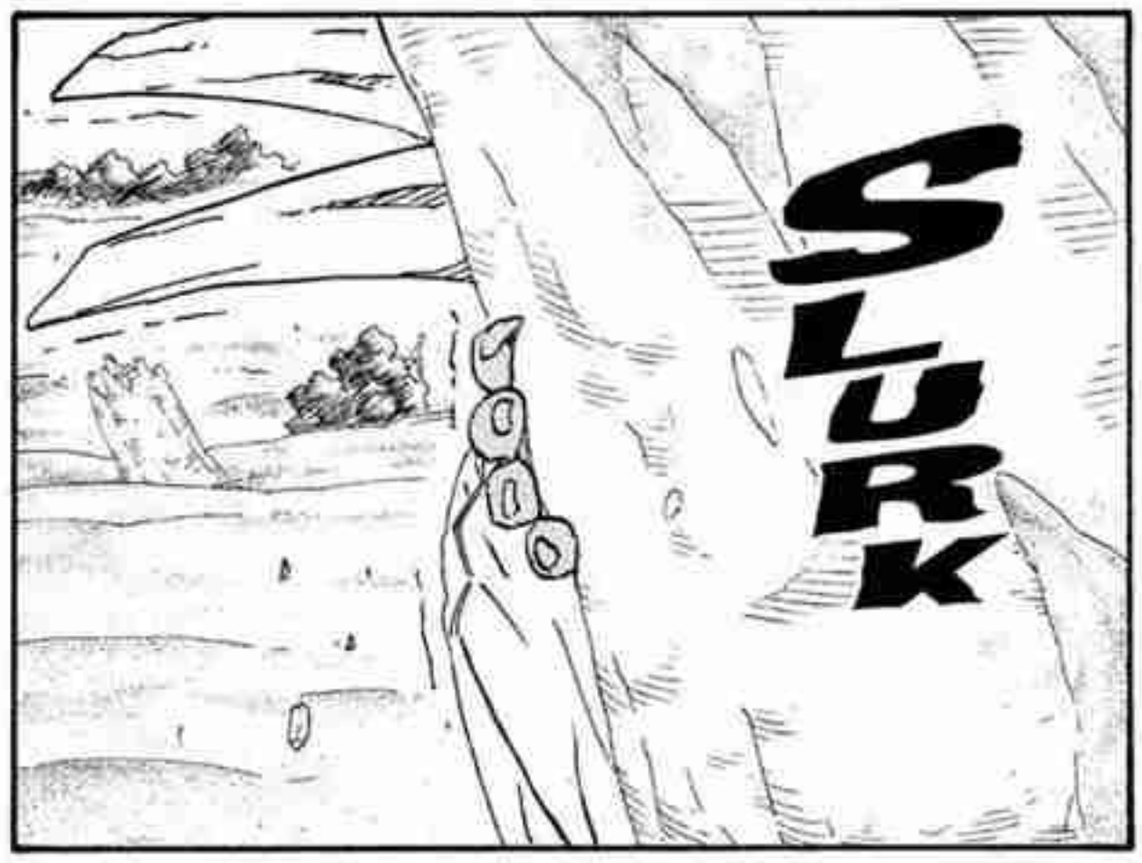
SLURK
SLURK

Number 216: Halberd and Shield...zz


SLURK



WHAT IS THAT?!
...


SLURK

SHOOSH

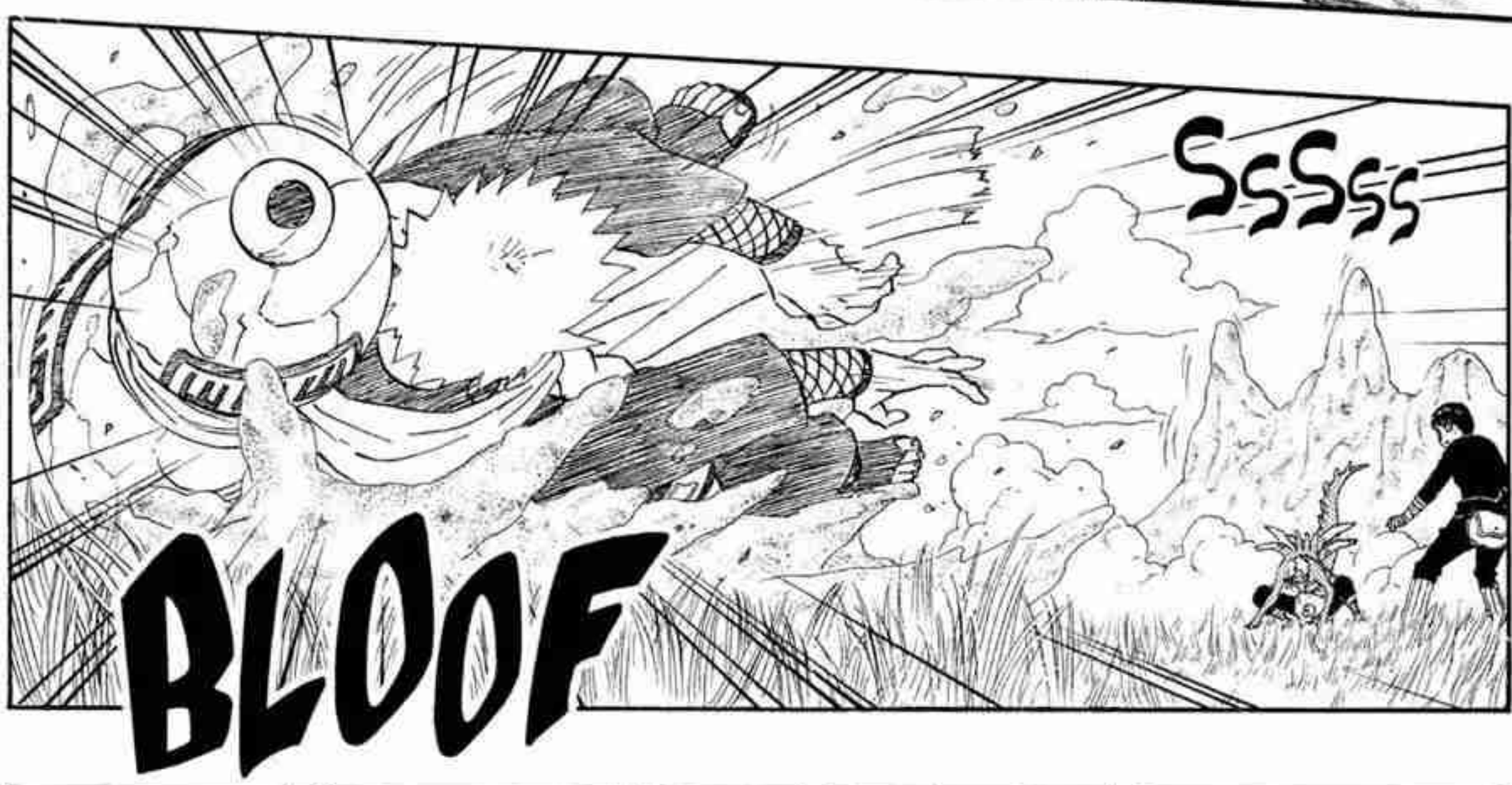
WOSH

READ THIS WAY
SABAKUKYÛ! THE COFFIN OF CRUSHING SAND!
RIK
PFAF
TUMP
SWUK
SLURR
MMF
SKU SH KRUP
TAK TAK
SKASHOOSH
SPAP
THOP

ドス

ZWOO

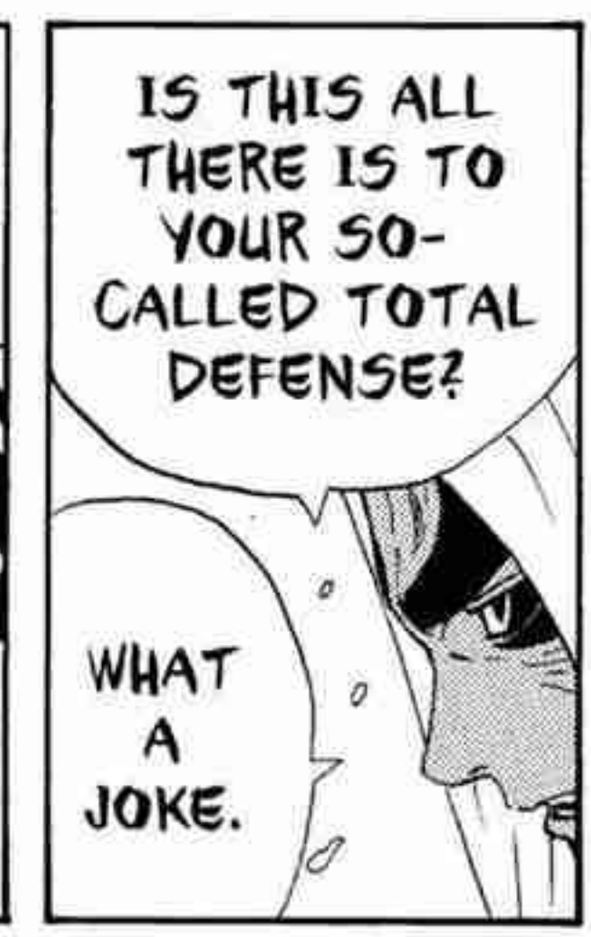
SKISSSH
!!


SSSSS
BLOOF

愛
PLIK
PLIK

...!

RRG...
...!

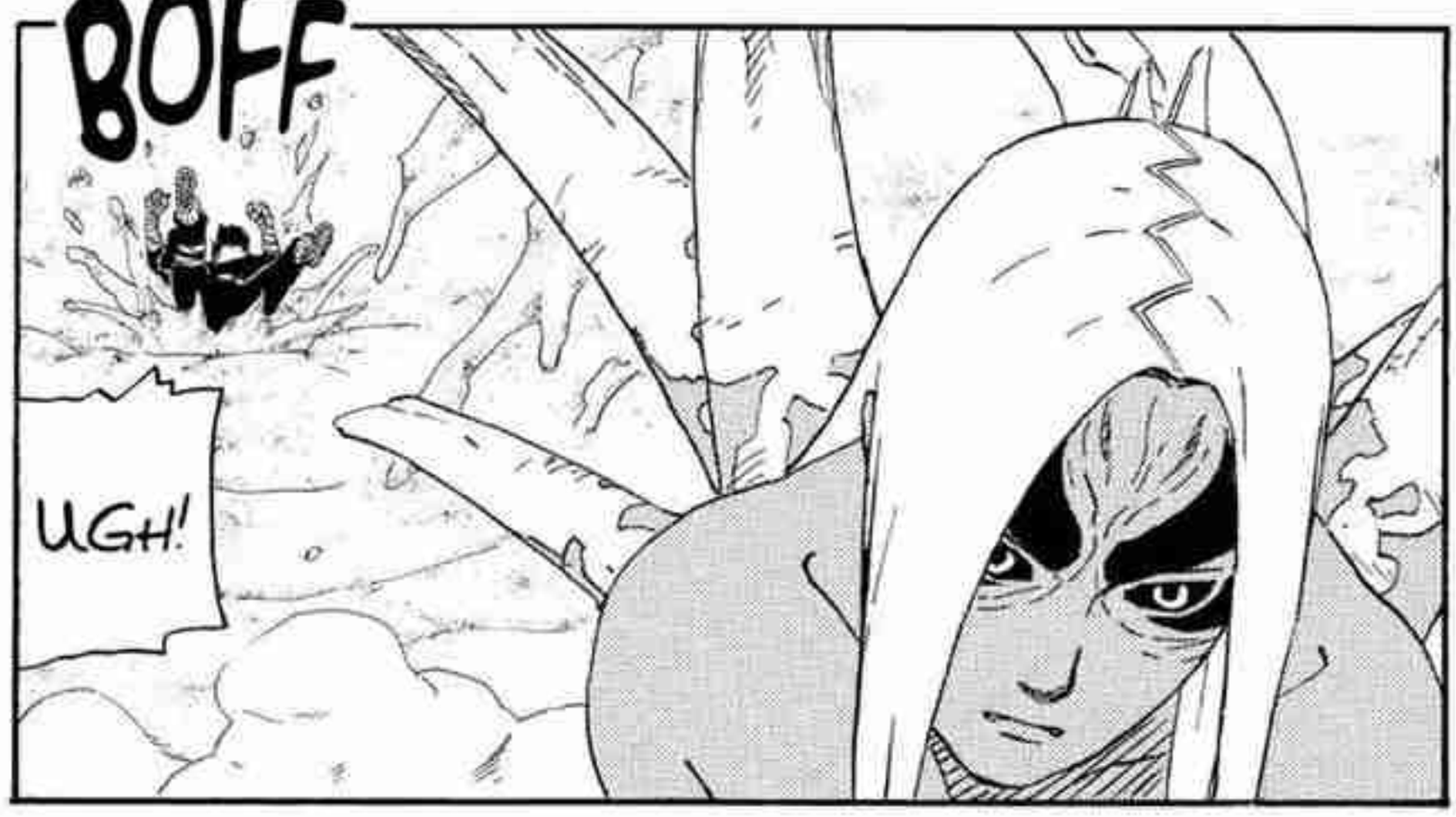

IS THIS ALL THERE IS TO YOUR SO-CALLED TOTAL DEFENSE?
WHAT A JOKE.

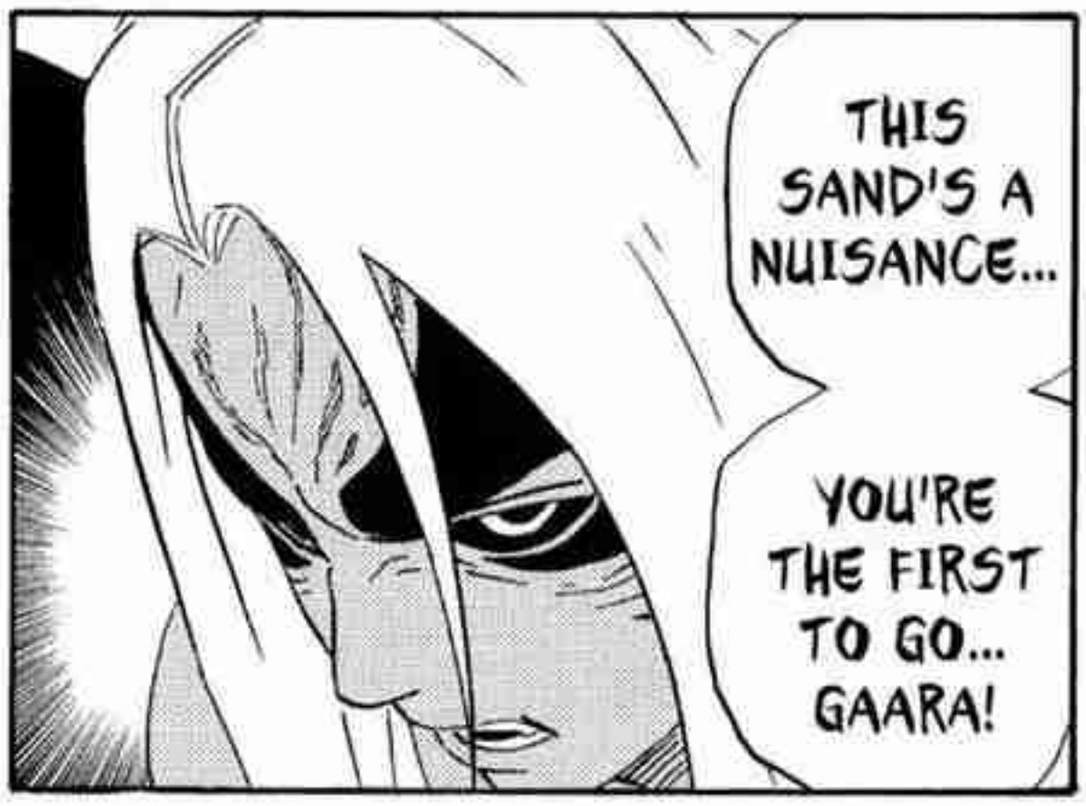
HE'S NOT YOUR ONLY OPPONENT!
FSSH
I'M HERE TOO!!
!
SO YOU COAT YOURSELF WITH SAND...
I SEE...
KA
BO
PFOOF
!!
KIL AH
!
!

SOONG

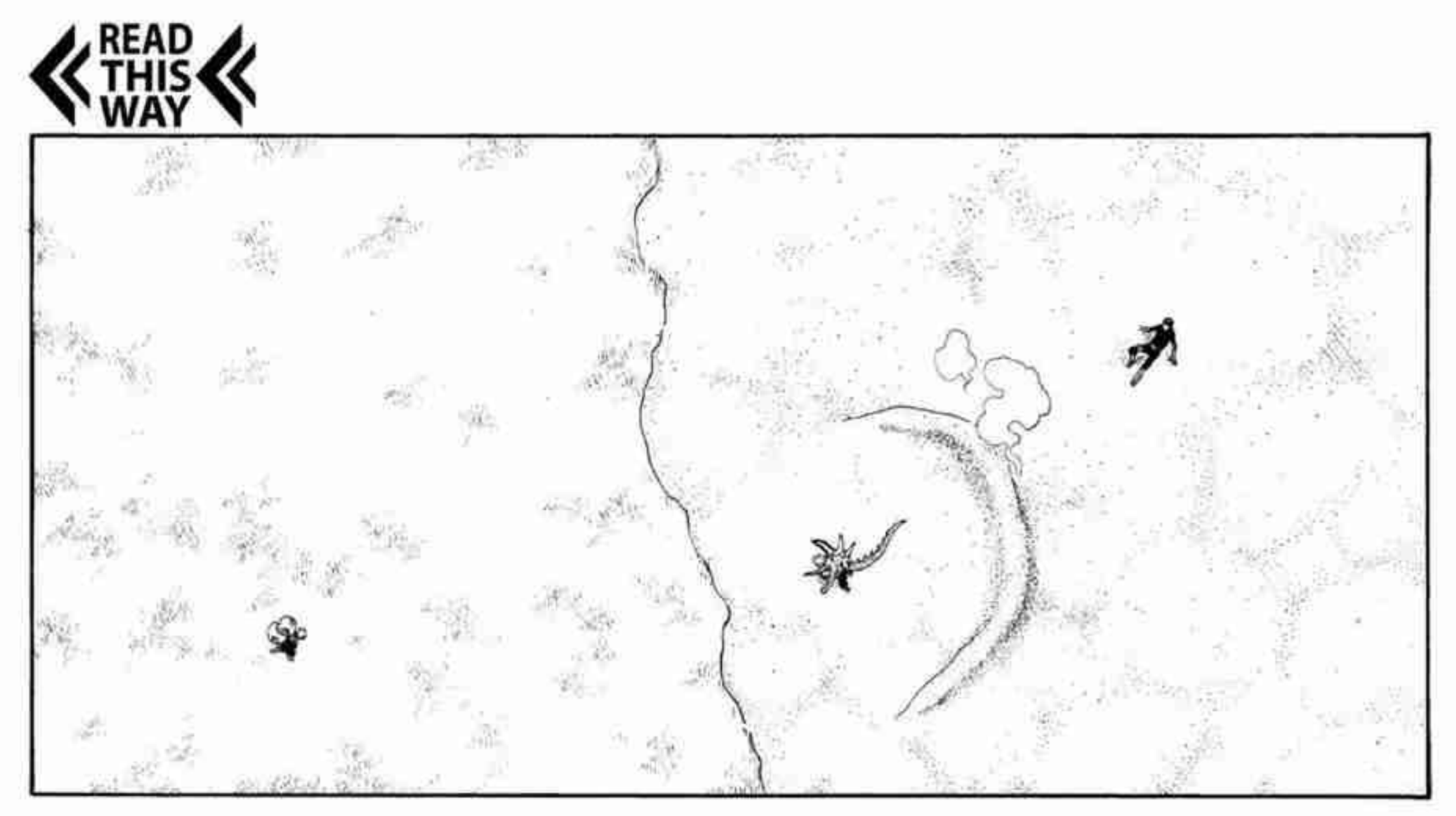
WHOA!!

...
愛


BOFF
UGH!


THIS SAND'S A NUISANCE...
YOU'RE THE FIRST TO GO... GAARA!

MY BODY'S STILL... I'LL ONLY GET IN THE WAY...
THROB
URG...


READ THIS WAY

SHRUK
SPUP
SLUR

...!
!
SLURR

SLURRG
TESSENKA NO MAI! IRON FLOWER DANCE!!

SHAA

VINE!

DID HE JUST PULL OUT HIS... SPINE?!

KRAK

SNAP

KRAK

POFF POFF POFF

POOOF

SKRIK

KRAK RAK

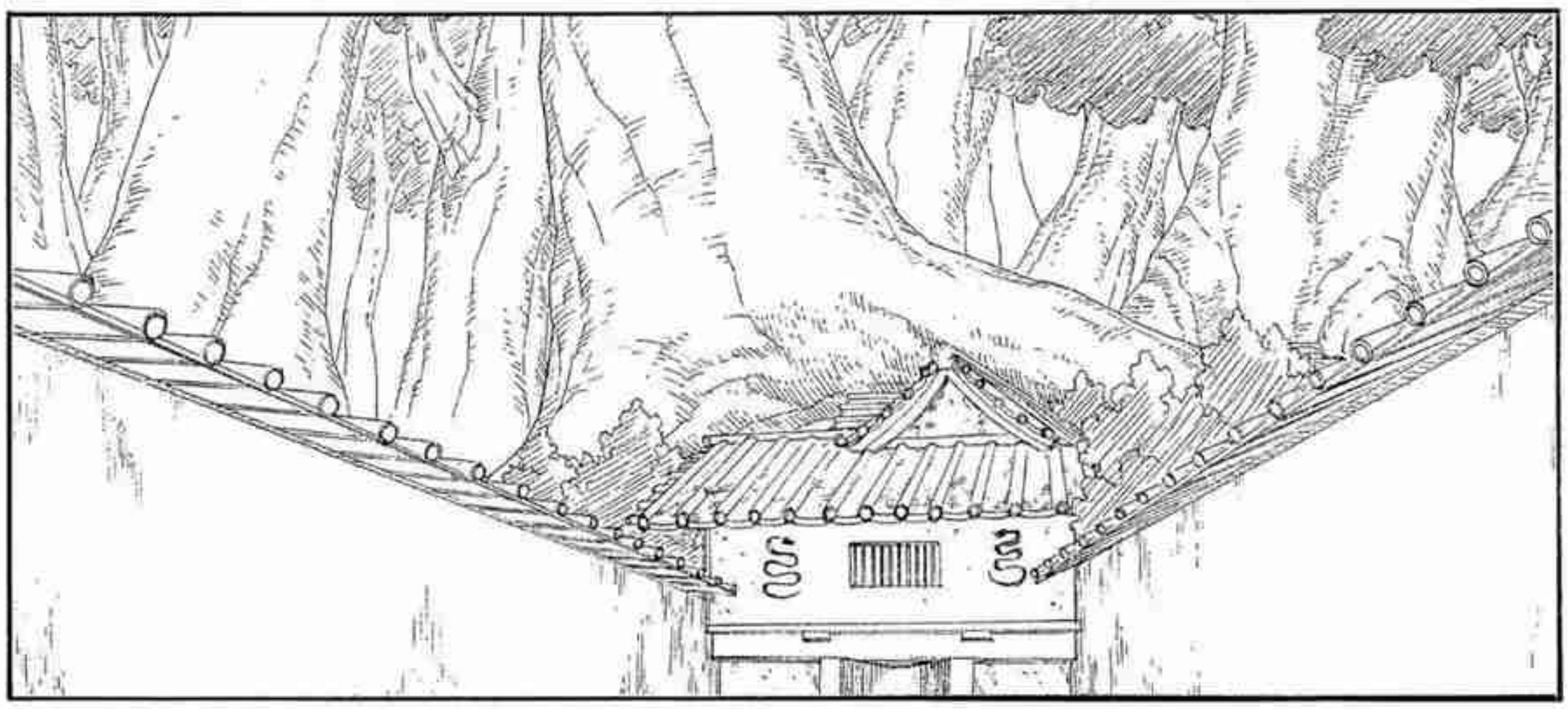
KRAK

SLURR

THEY'LL PIERCE THROUGH YOUR BODY ALONG WITH THE SAND SHIELD.

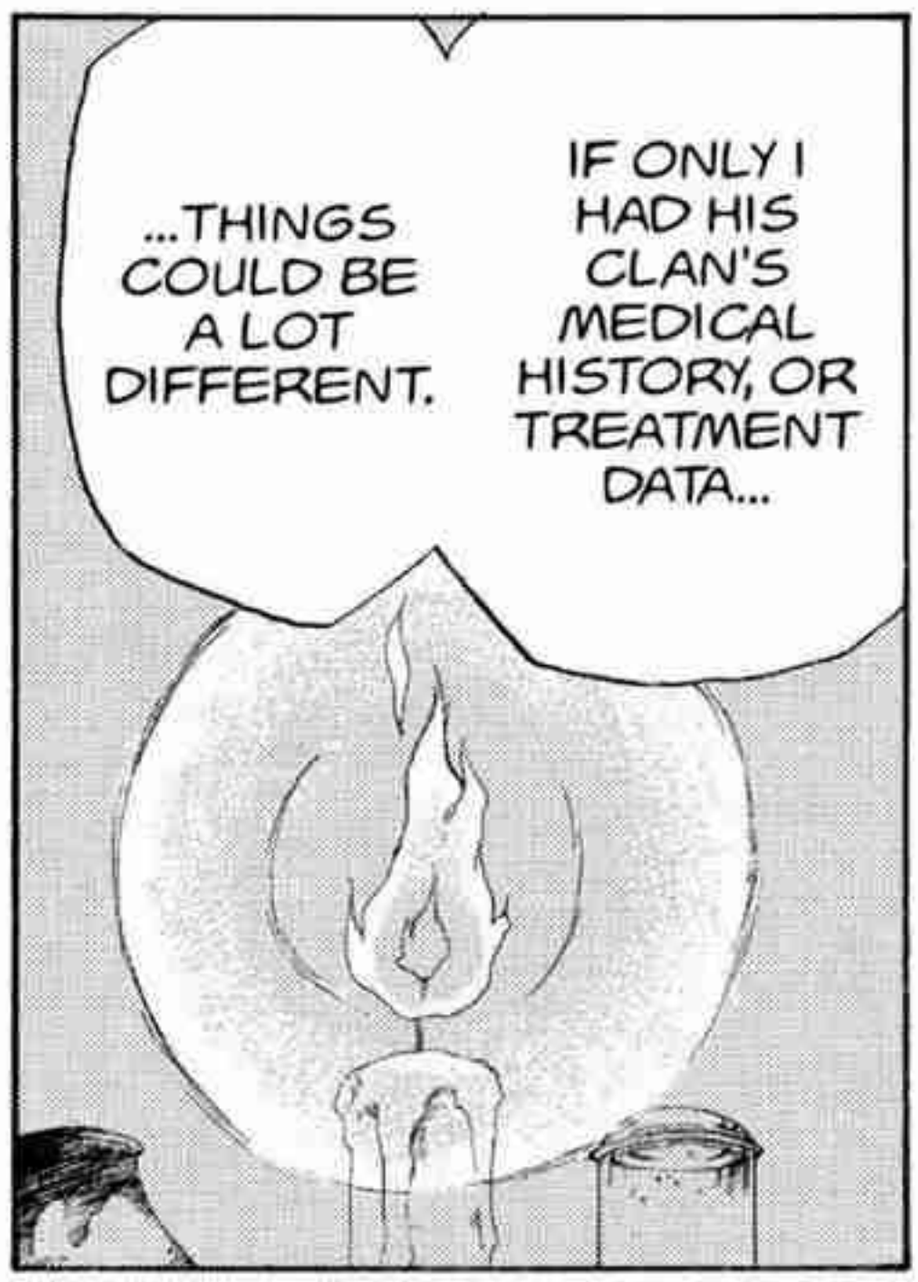
MY BONES HAVE CALCIFIED AS FAR AS THEY'LL GO.

READ THIS WAY
...?!
愛
I GUESS TIME'S... RUNNING SHORT...
...
KOFF
KOOM
TOTAL SAND DEFENSE! SHUKAKU'S SHIELD!



HE SHOULD BE FINE FOR A WHILE YET.

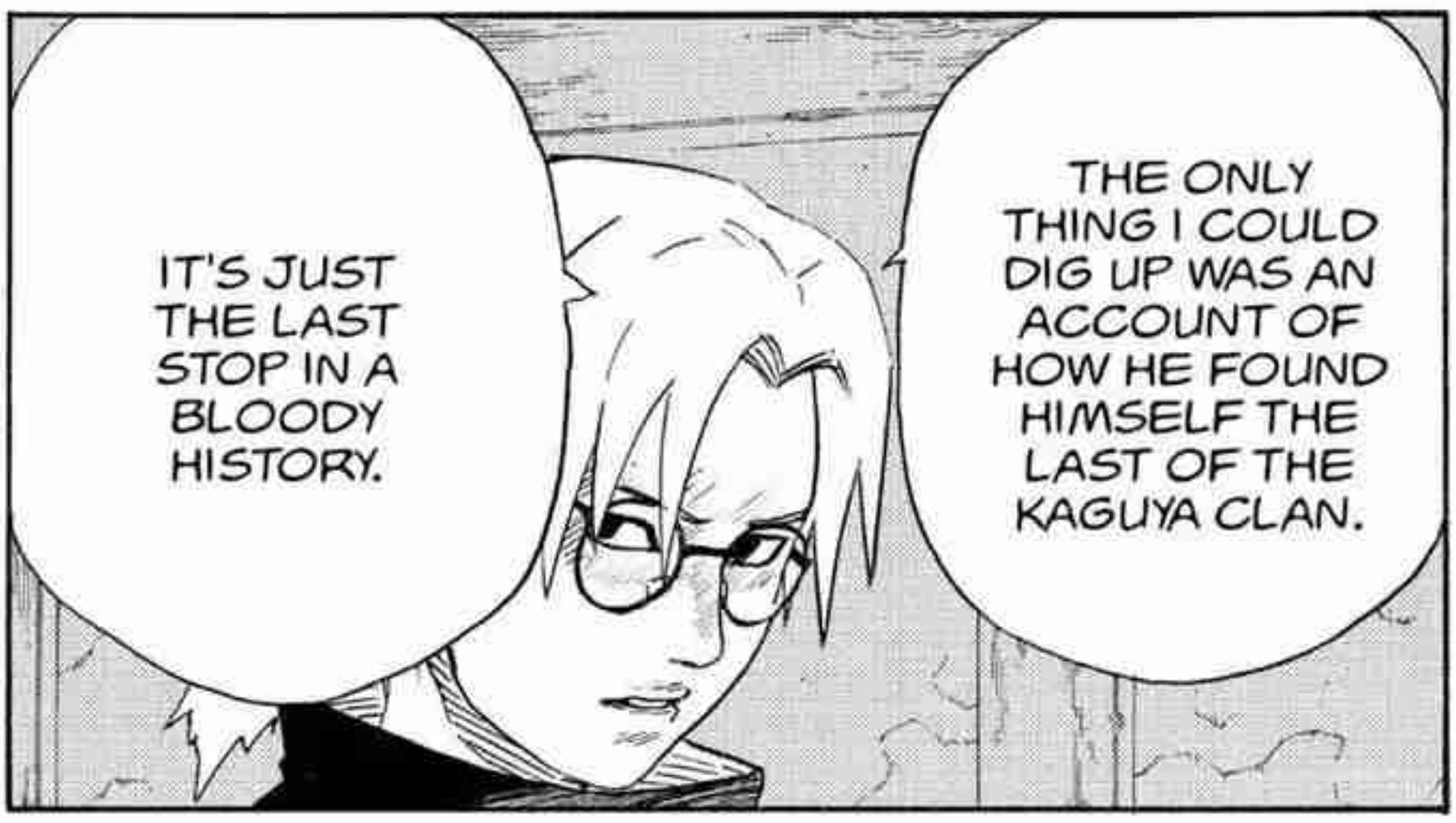
HOW MUCH LONGER WILL KIMIMARO LAST?
KABUTO...

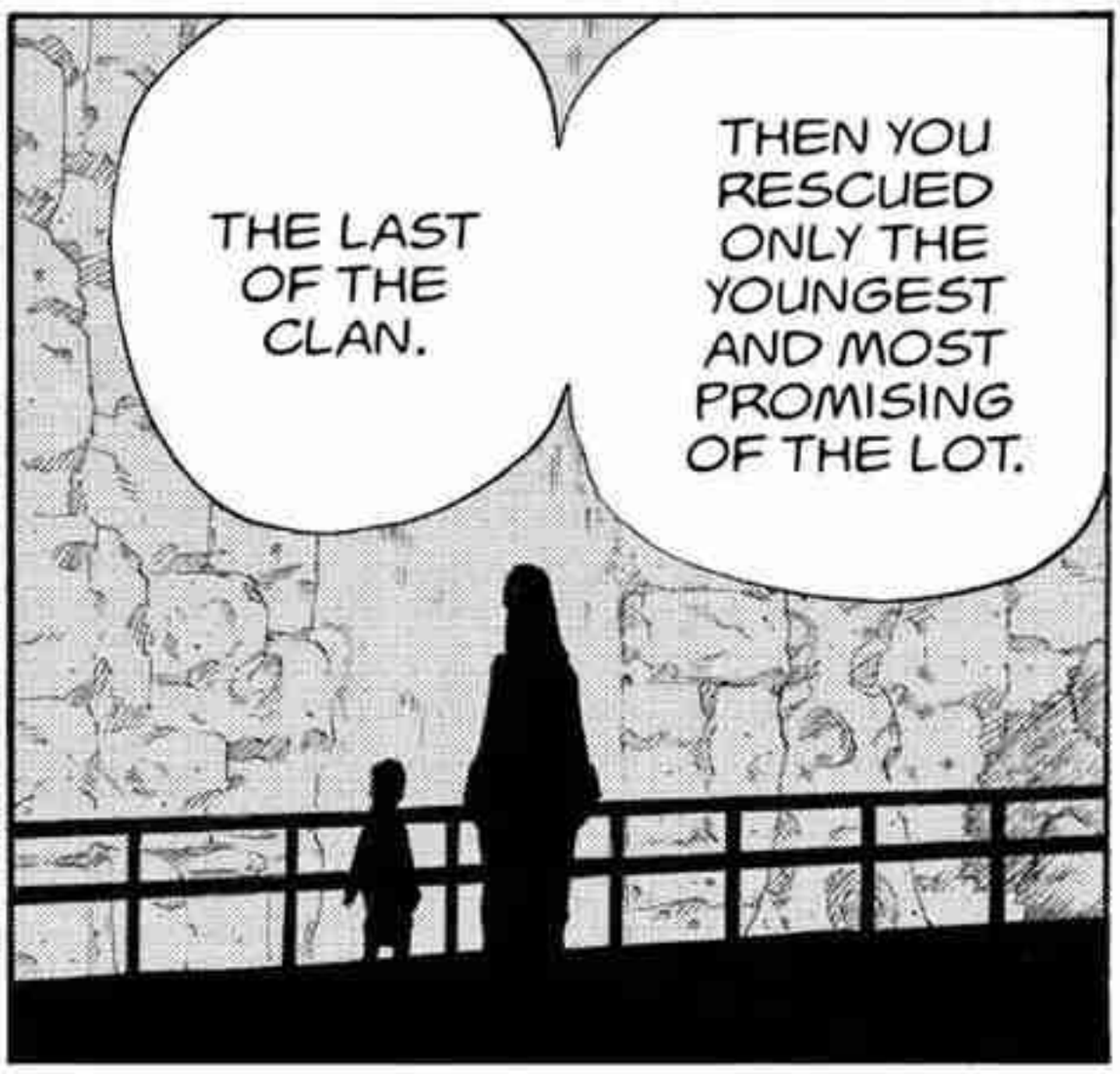

...THINGS COULD BE A LOT DIFFERENT.
IF ONLY I HAD HIS CLAN'S MEDICAL HISTORY, OR TREATMENT DATA...

...THERE'S JUST TOO LITTLE INFORMATION ON HIS BODY.
I TREATED HIM THE BEST I COULD, BUT...

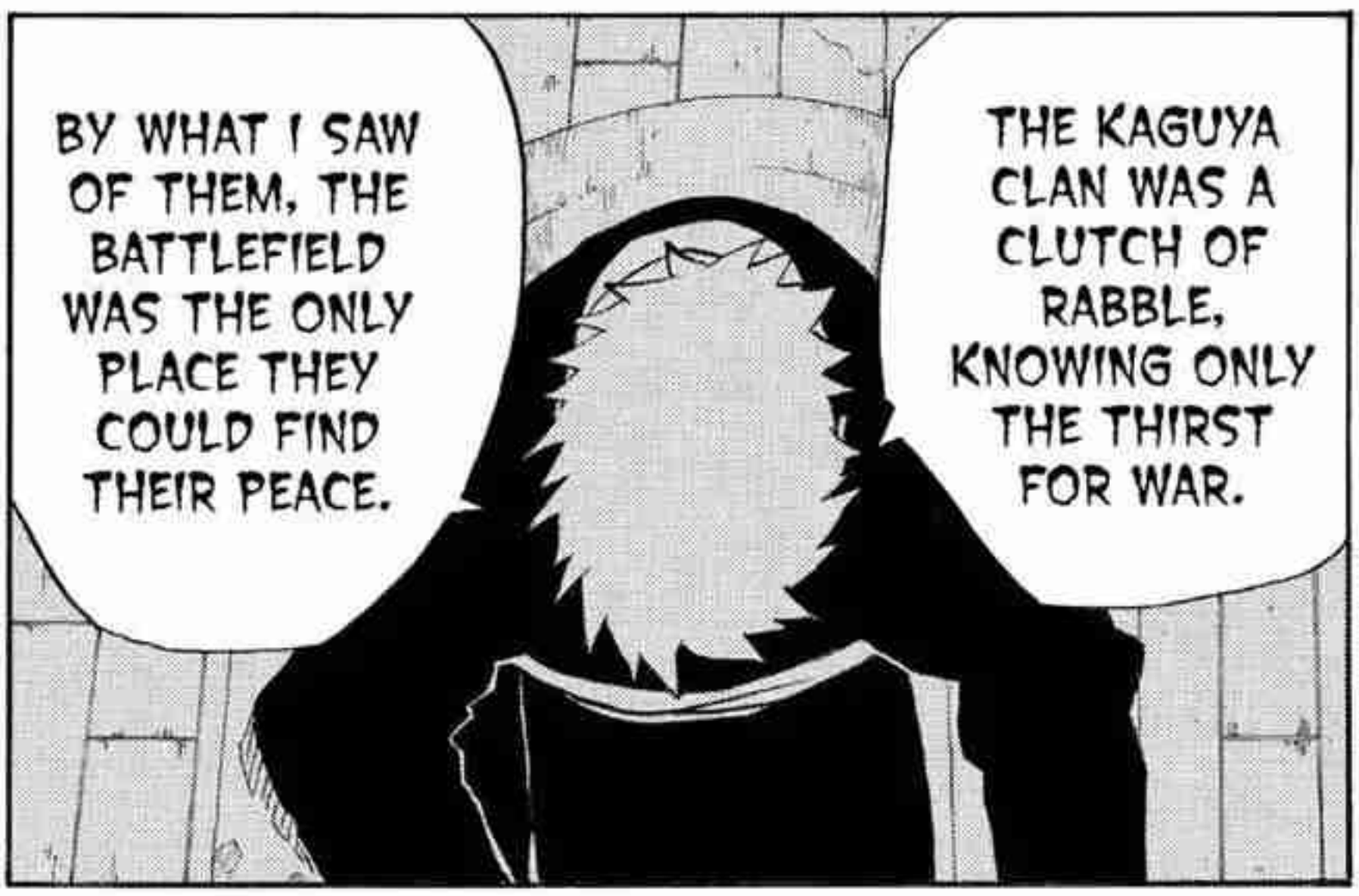
READ
THIS
WAY

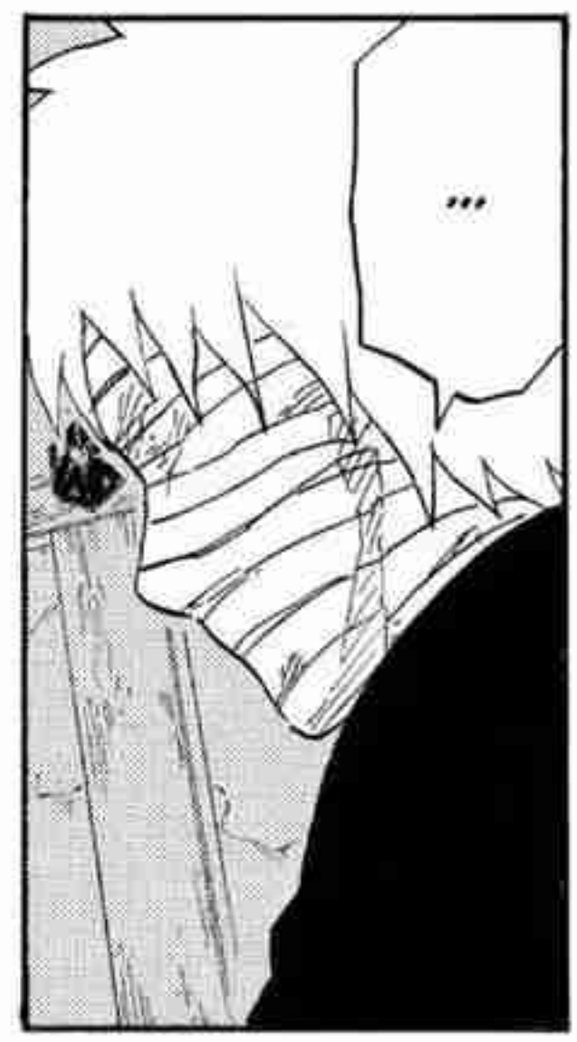
...

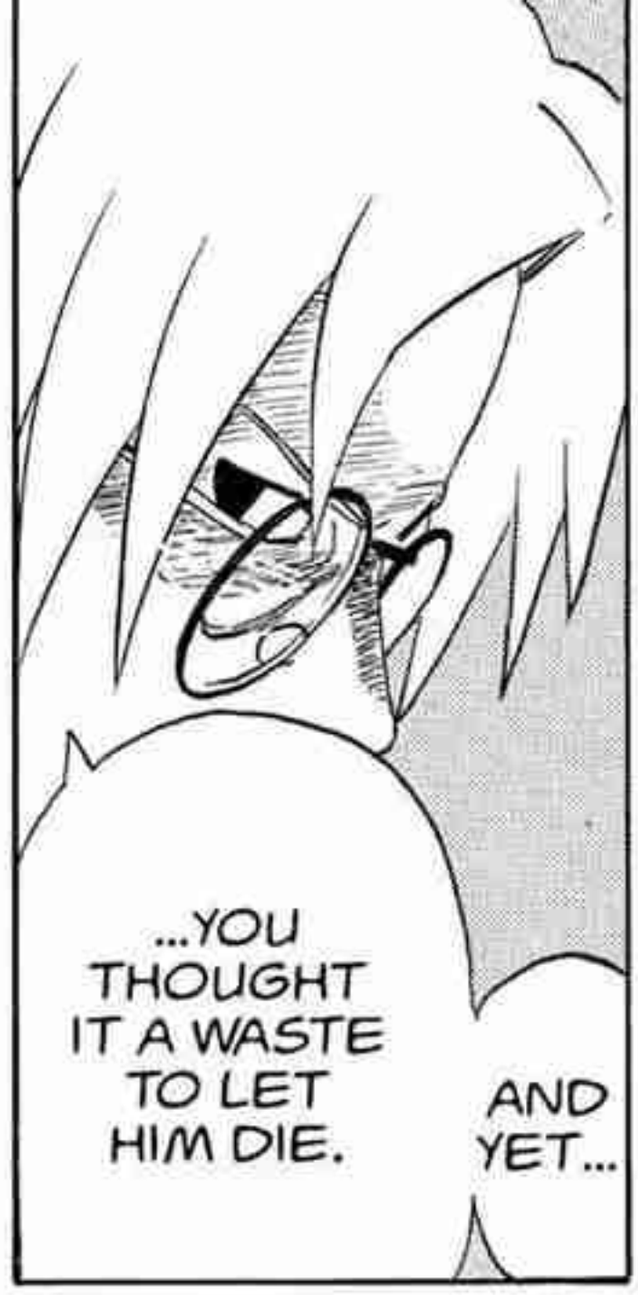

IT'S JUST THE LAST STOP IN A BLOODY HISTORY.
THE ONLY THING I COULD DIG UP WAS AN ACCOUNT OF HOW HE FOUND HIMSELF THE LAST OF THE KAGUYA CLAN.

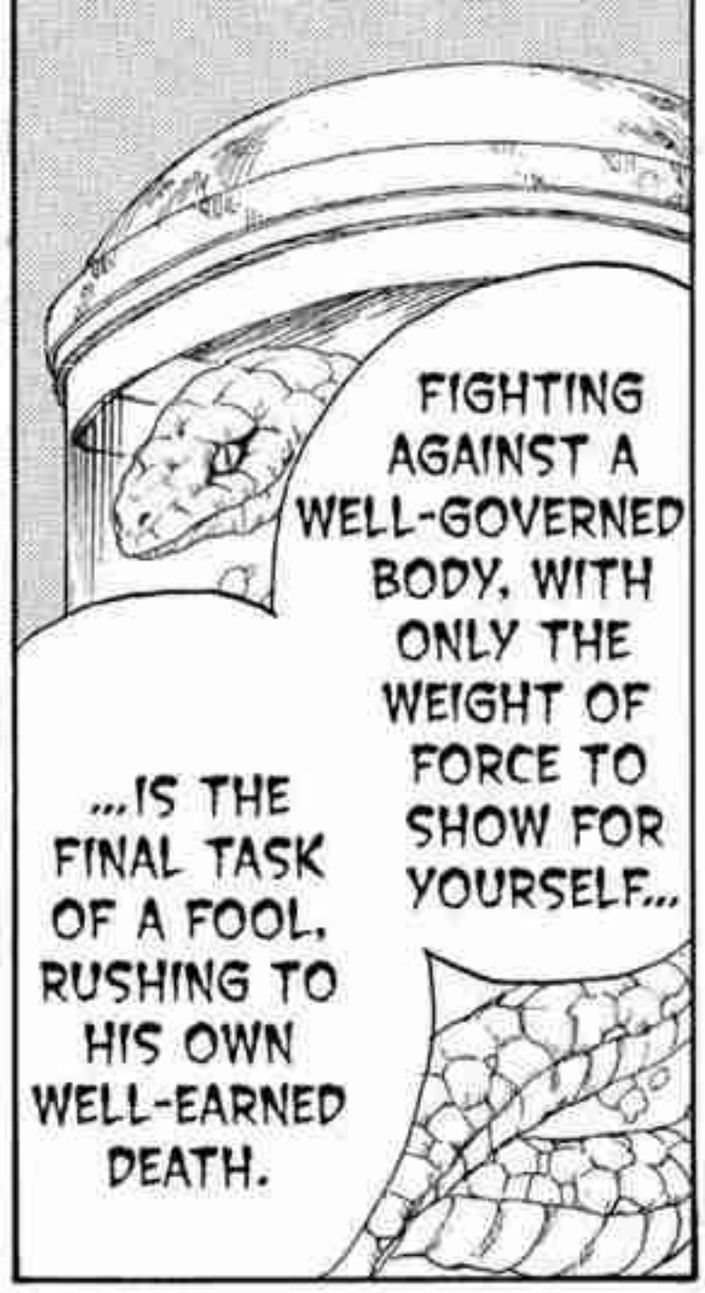

THE LAST OF THE CLAN.
THEN YOU RESCUED ONLY THE YOUNGEST AND MOST PROMISING OF THE LOT.

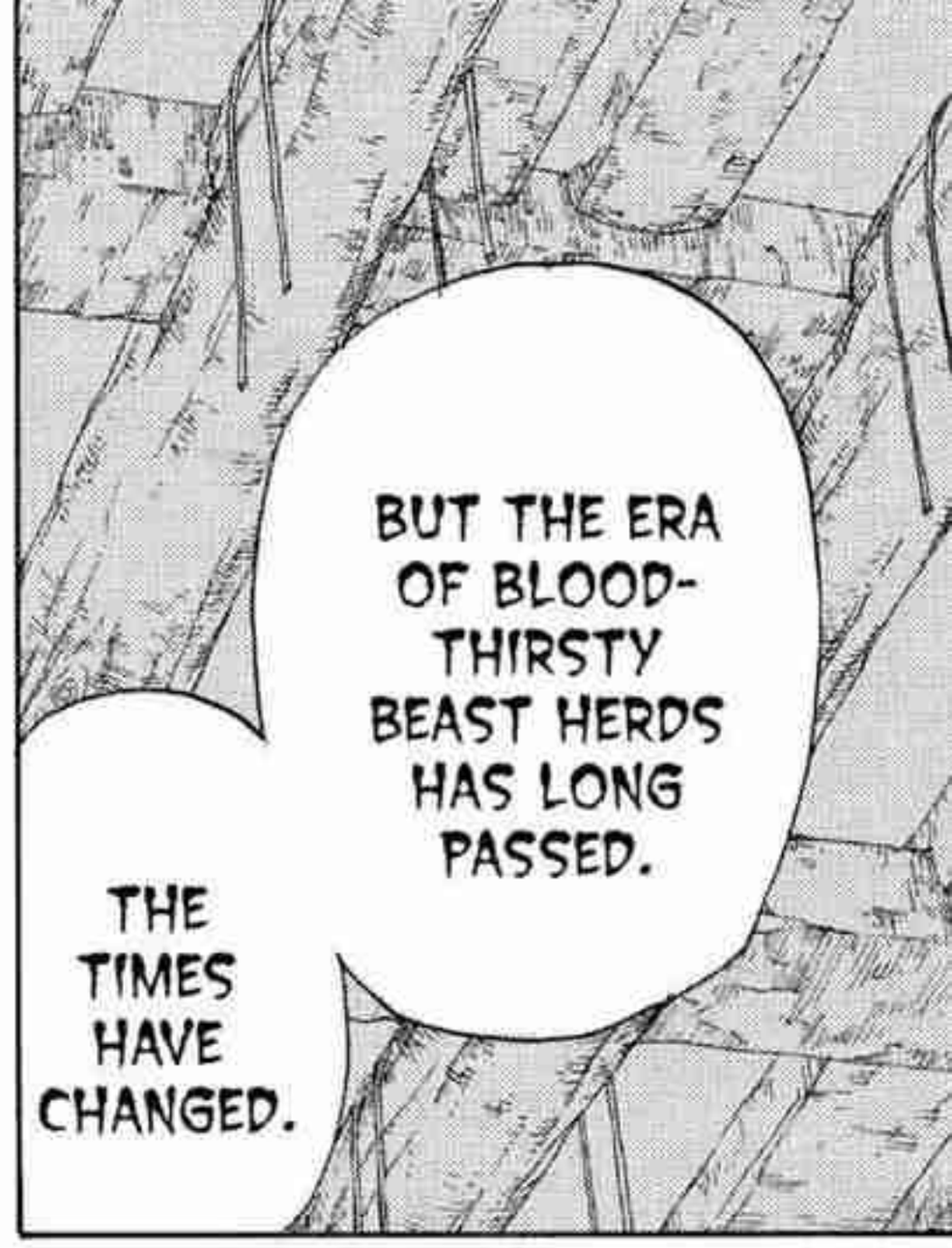
THE WHOLE FOOLISH CLAN WAS WIPED OUT WHEN IT CHALLENGED...
...THE GREAT NATION OF KIRIGAKURE, ON THEIR OWN.

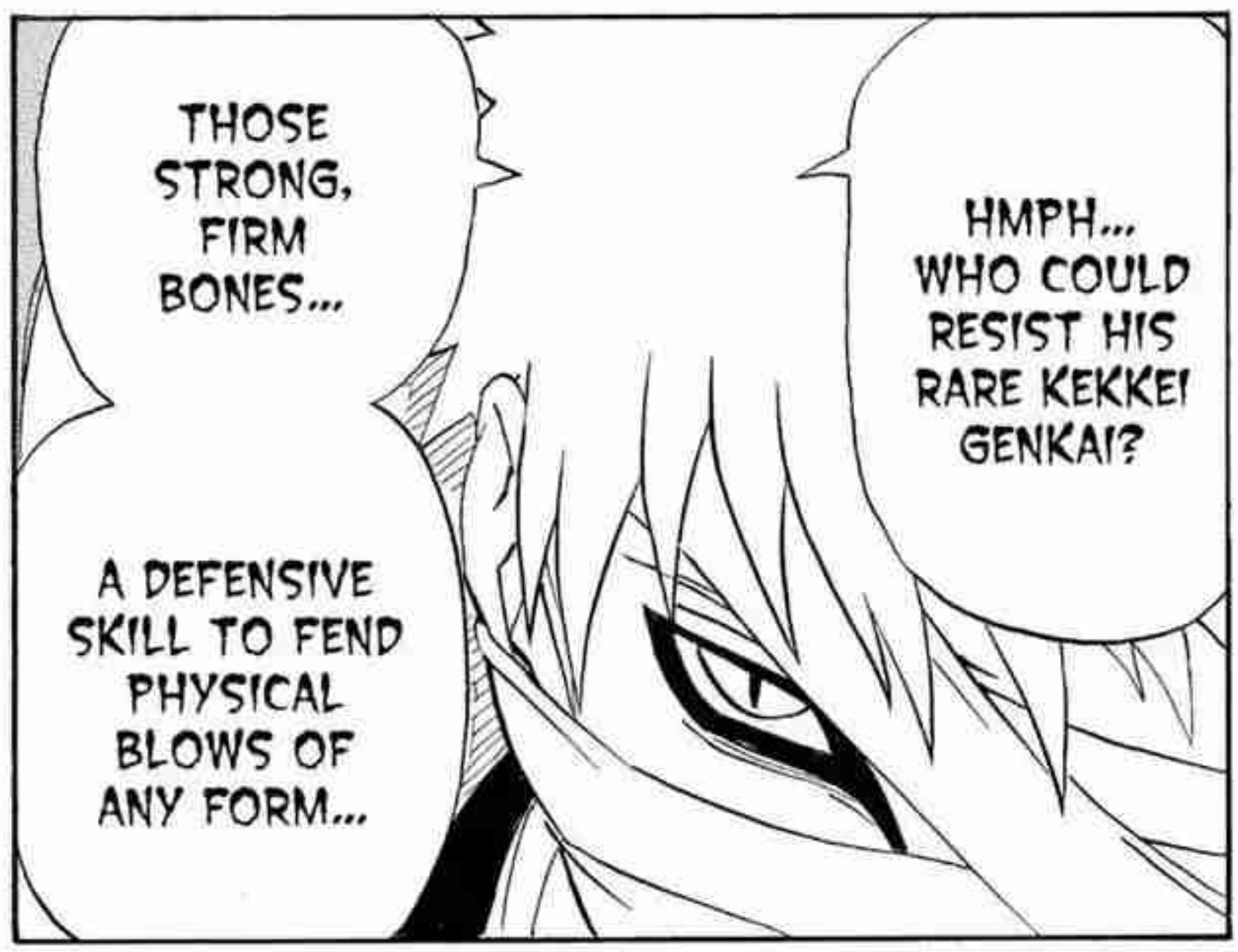

BY WHAT I SAW OF THEM, THE BATTLEFIELD WAS THE ONLY PLACE THEY COULD FIND THEIR PEACE.
THE KAGUYA CLAN WAS A CLUTCH OF RABBLE, KNOWING ONLY THE THIRST FOR WAR.


...


...YOU THOUGHT IT A WASTE TO LET HIM DIE.
AND YET...

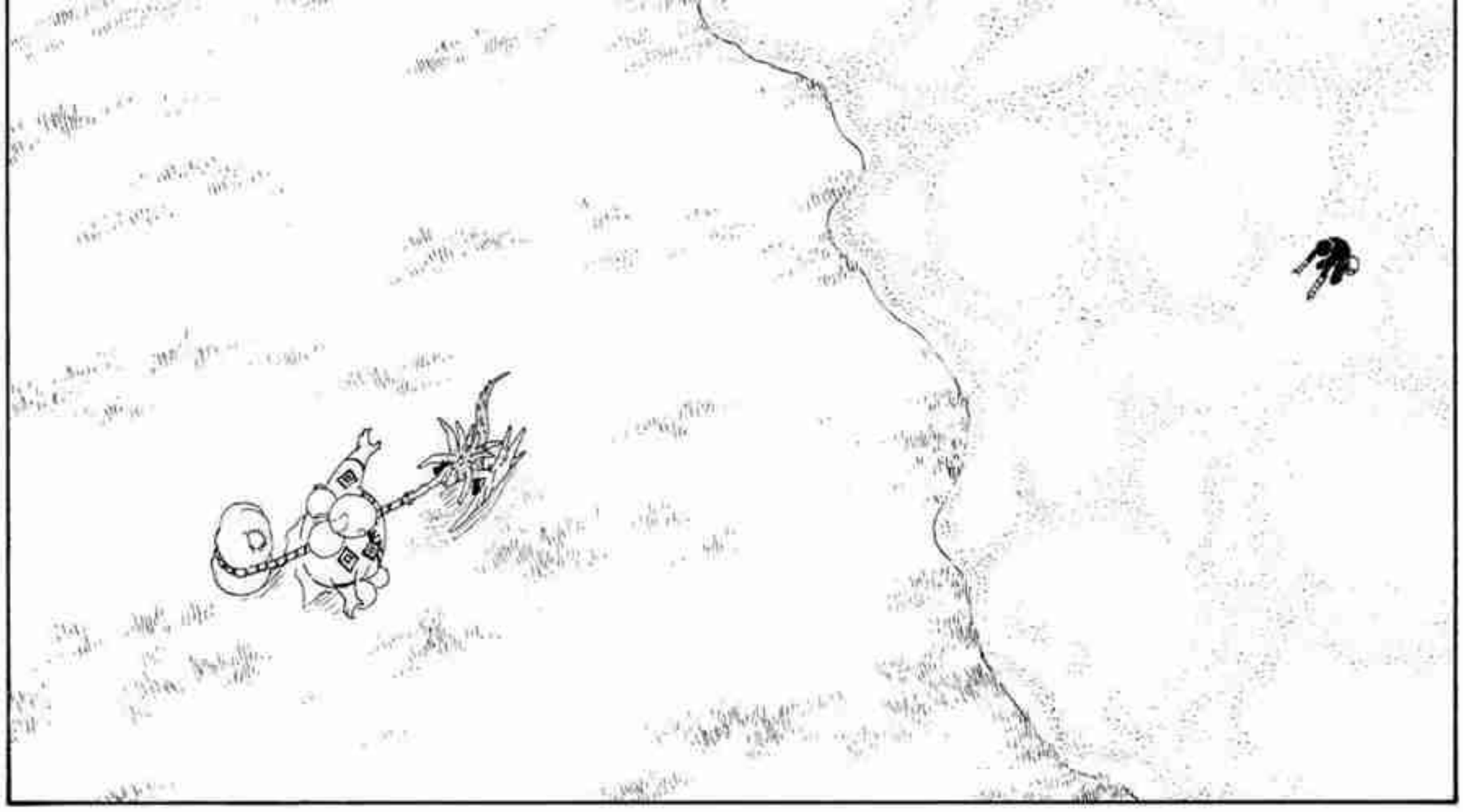

FIGHTING AGAINST A WELL-GOVERNED BODY, WITH ONLY THE WEIGHT OF FORCE TO SHOW FOR YOURSELF...
...IS THE FINAL TASK OF A FOOL, RUSHING TO HIS OWN WELL-EARNED DEATH.


BUT THE ERA OF BLOOD-THIRSTY BEAST HERDS HAS LONG PASSED.
THE TIMES HAVE CHANGED.


THOSE STRONG, FIRM BONES...
A DEFENSIVE SKILL TO FEND PHYSICAL BLOWS OF ANY FORM...
HMPH... WHO COULD RESIST HIS RARE KEKKEI GENKAI?

...

...HE CAN TURN HIS BONES INTO PIKES.
HIS OFFENSE IS EXCELLENT...

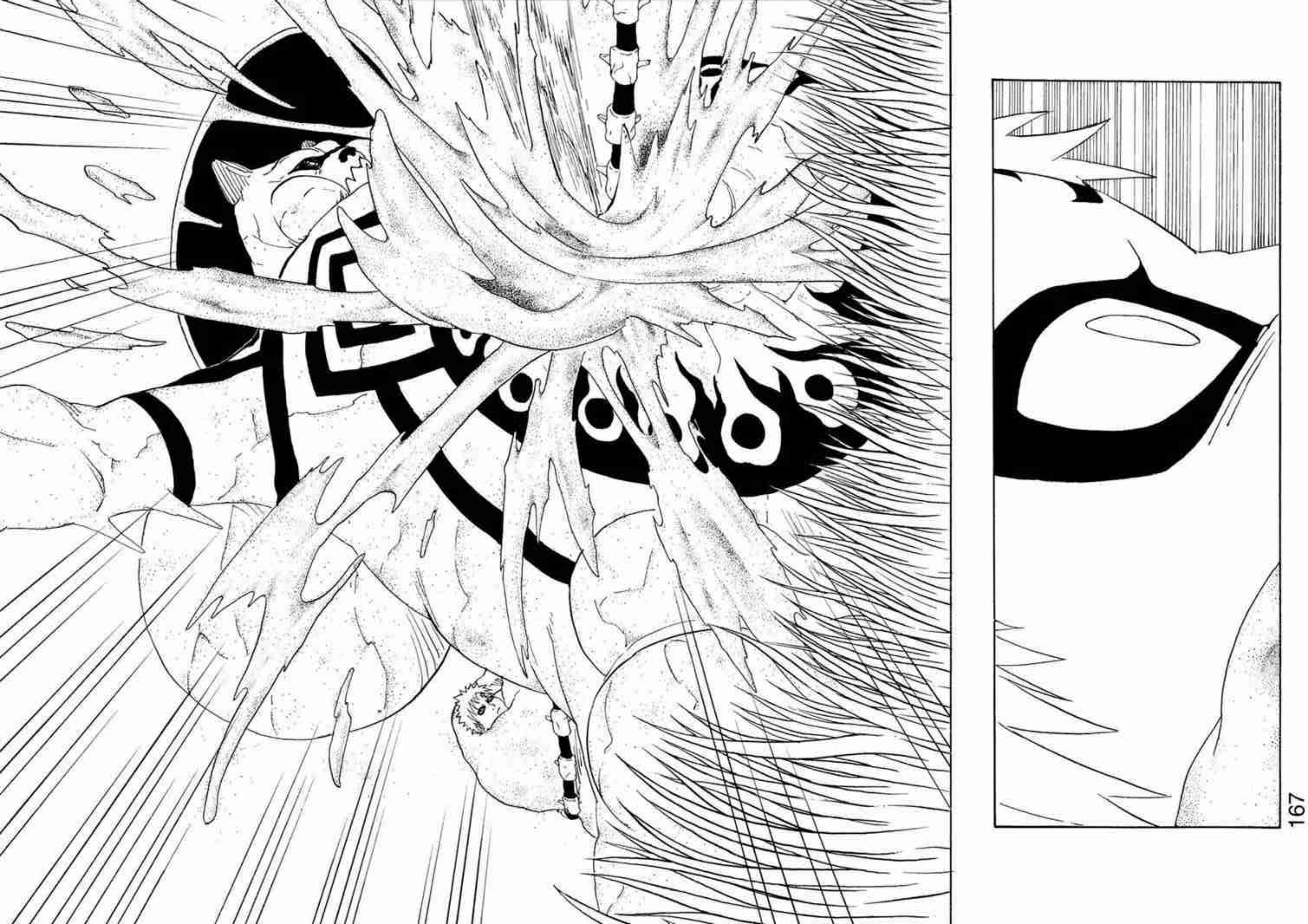


!

...AND WITH THAT UNUSUAL FORM IT'S TAKEN... YES! HE'LL BE FINE! NOTHING COULD POSSIBLY PENETRATE THAT...
HIS SAND SHIELD TRULY IS THE PERFECT DEFENSE... IT TAKES NO MORE THAN ONE FIGHT TO SEE THAT...

SHOOOM

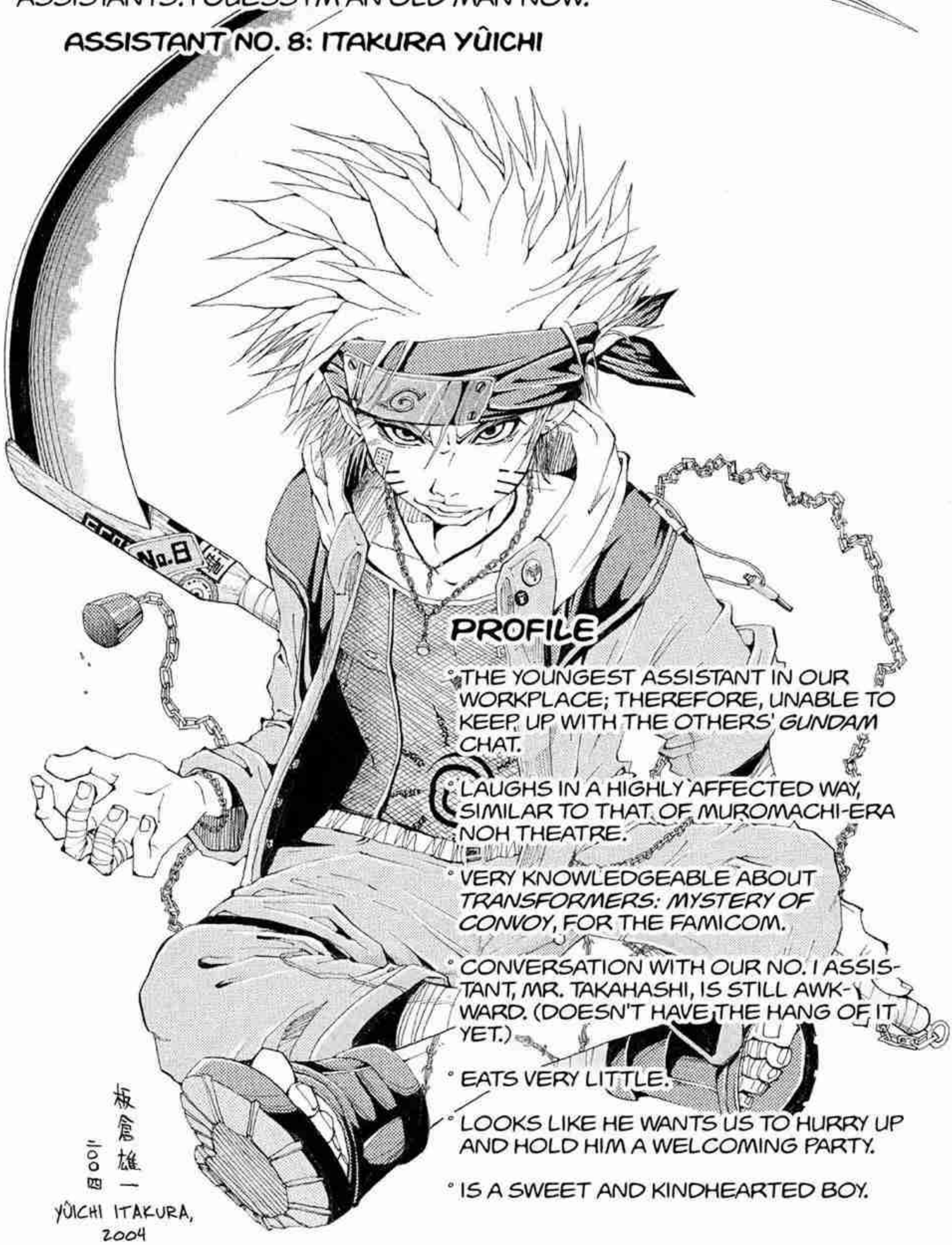
ドガッ



MEET KISHIMOTO MASASHI'S ASSISTANTS PART 8

ANOTHER YOUNG ASSISTANT HAS JOINED THE NARUTO STAFF. LATELY I'M BEGINNING TO FEEL THE AGE DIFFERENCE WITH MY ASSISTANTS. I GUESS I'M AN OLD MAN NOW.

ASSISTANT NO. 8: ITAKURA YÛICHI



PROFILE

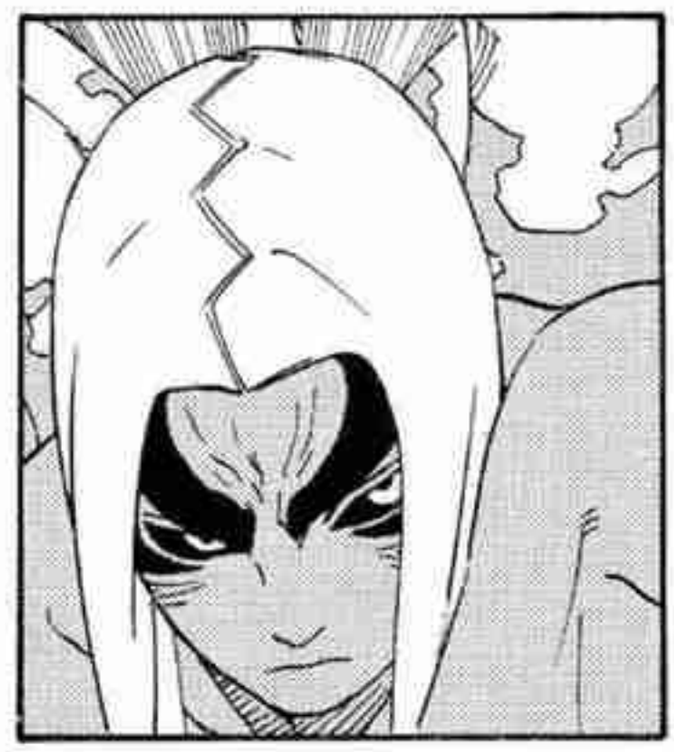
- THE YOUNGEST ASSISTANT IN OUR WORKPLACE; THEREFORE, UNABLE TO KEEP UP WITH THE OTHERS' *GUNDAM* CHAT.
- LAUGHS IN A HIGHLY AFFECTED WAY, SIMILAR TO THAT OF MUROMACHI-ERA NOH THEATRE.
- VERY KNOWLEDGEABLE ABOUT *TRANSFORMERS: MYSTERY OF CONVOY*, FOR THE FAMICOM.
- CONVERSATION WITH OUR NO. 1 ASSISTANT, MR. TAKAHASHI, IS STILL AWKWARD. (DOESN'T HAVE THE HANG OF IT YET.)
- EATS VERY LITTLE.
- LOOKS LIKE HE WANTS US TO HURRY UP AND HOLD HIM A WELCOMING PARTY.
- IS A SWEET AND KINDHEARTED BOY.

Number 217:

For The Most Precious

愛

KRAK

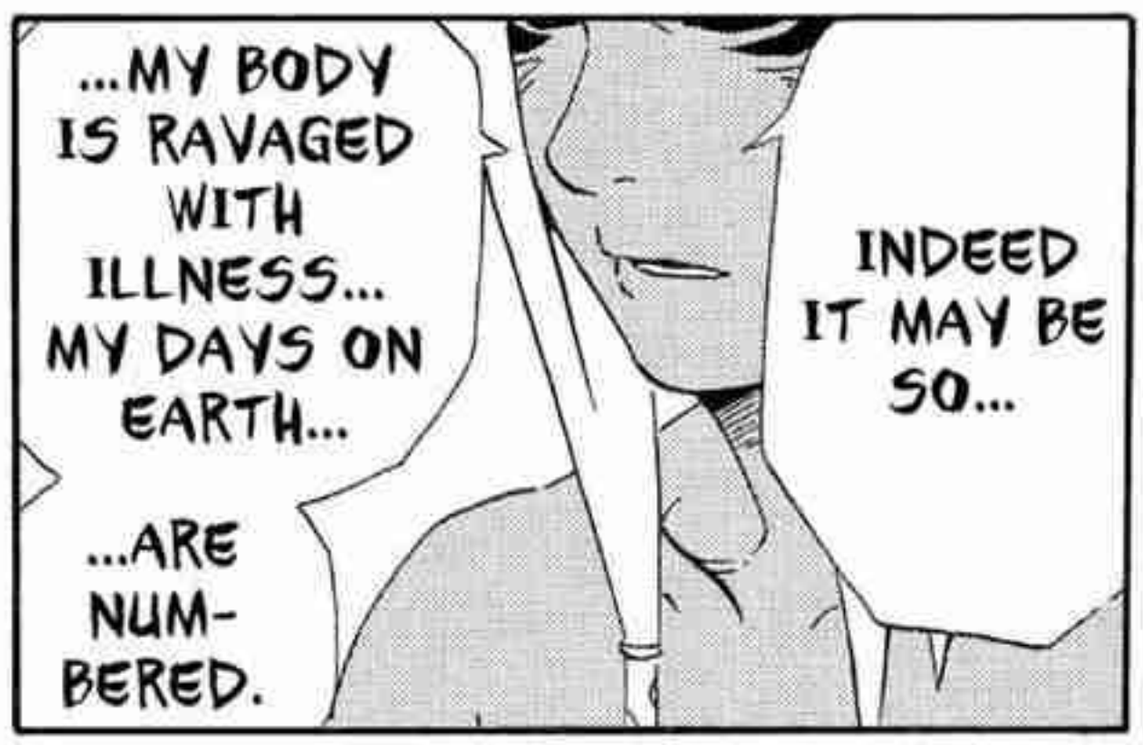


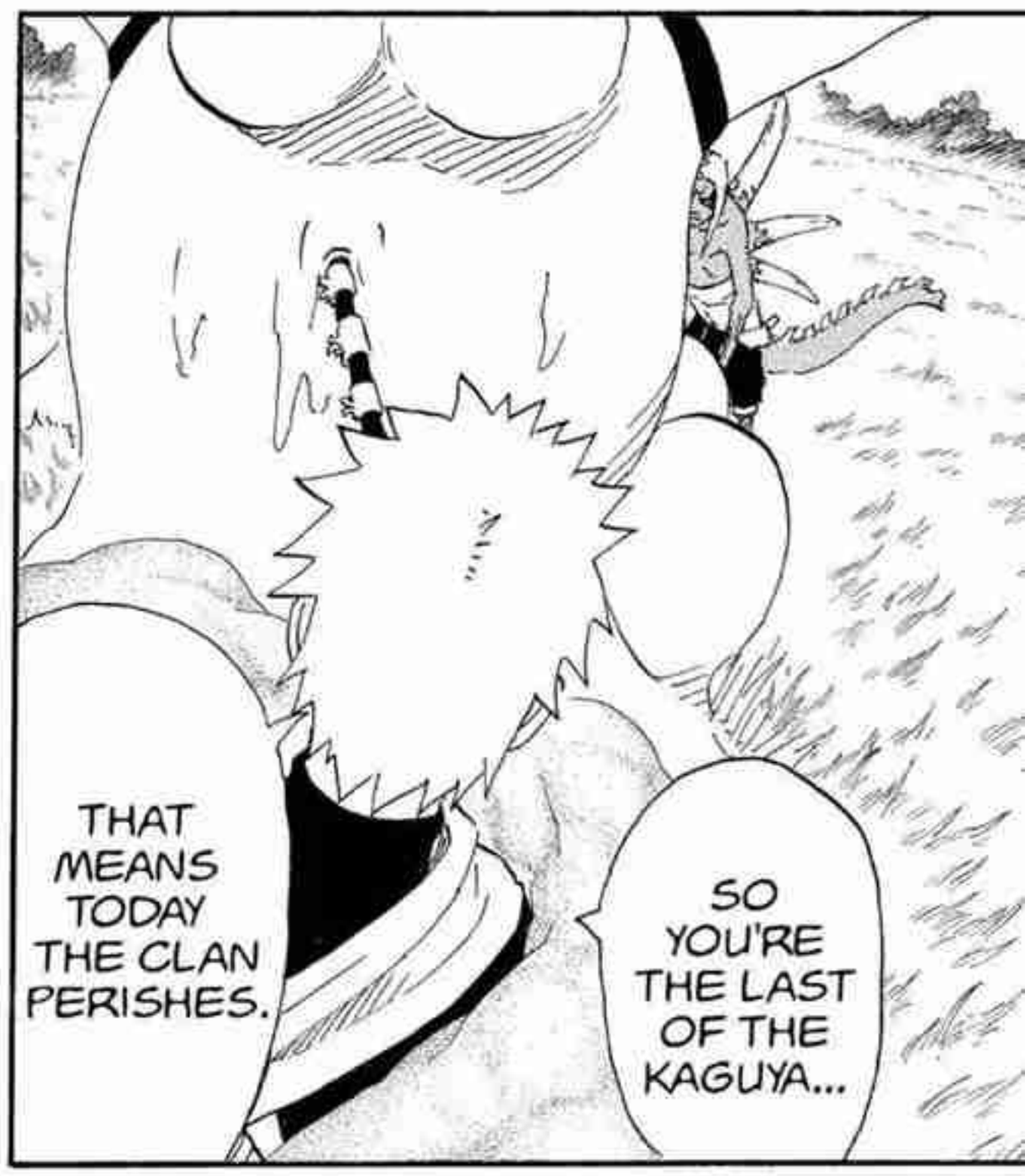
KRAK
KRAK

READ THIS WAY
...!!
...USED MY CHAKRA TO APPLY PRESSURE, AND KNEADED THEM INTO THE SAND.
I PULLED TOGETHER THE DENSEST MINERALS IN THE SOIL...
VERY SOLID...
IT'S A KEKKEI GENKAI, YES?
愛
THIS MOVE OF YOURS...
...

...

...A POWER I ALONE POSSESS.
IT IS OF THE KAGUYA CLAN...


...MY BODY IS RAVAGED WITH ILLNESS... MY DAYS ON EARTH...
...ARE NUM-BERED.
INDEED IT MAY BE SO...


THAT MEANS TODAY THE CLAN PERISHES.
SO YOU'RE THE LAST OF THE KAGUYA...

FOR I AM NOT ALONE.
AND YET...I WILL NOT BE EXTIN-GUISHED.

FOR THAT, I SHALL REMAIN FOREVER IN HIS HEART.
I AM AN ARM OF LORD OROCHIMARU'S AMBITION. I CARRIED OUT MY PART.

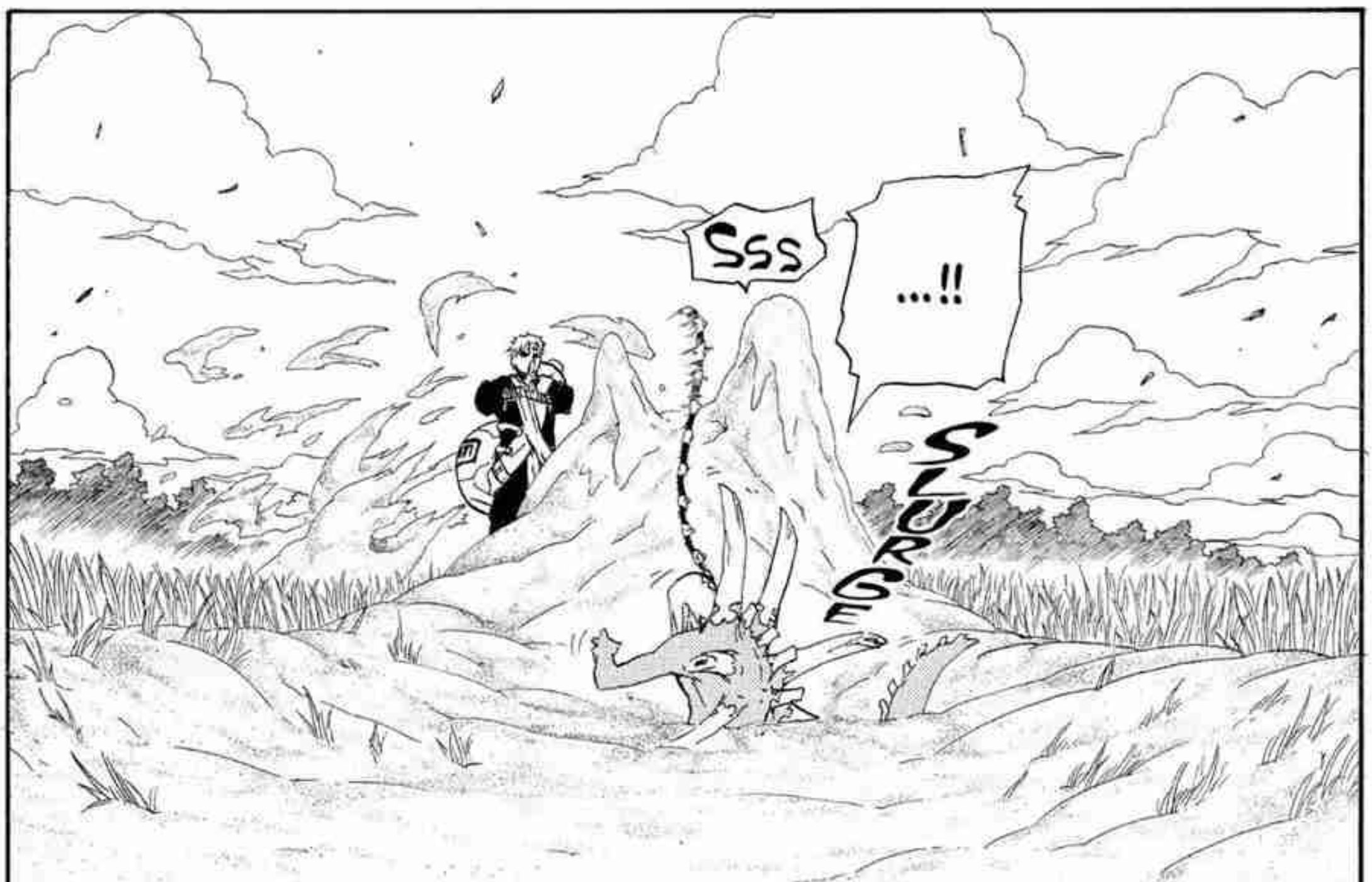
!

HOW SAD.
OROCHI-MARU BRAIN-WASHED YOU.
SHF

...

FWIP
THIS IS IT.
I'VE DONE TOO MANY BIG MOVES... CHAKRA IS GETTING PRECIOUS.

SLURK


SSS
...!!
SLURGE

SLURSHHH

SPLUP
YOU ARE INDEED FORMIDABLE...

SPLURP

HOW MUCH CHAKRA IS HE USING...
...?!

READ THIS WAY
SPLURRP
...
WITH THAT SAND PRESSURE ON EVERY INCH OF YOUR BODY, YOU WON'T BE ABLE TO MOVE A FINGER.
I'M SUCKING YOU DOWN AND BURYING YOU TWO HUNDRED METERS DOWN.
愛
...
...
愛
YOU DID IT...
THIS TIME, YOU... REALLY DID IT.
BRACKEN DANCE!
SAWARABI NO MAI!

PA SPAK SPAK SPAK

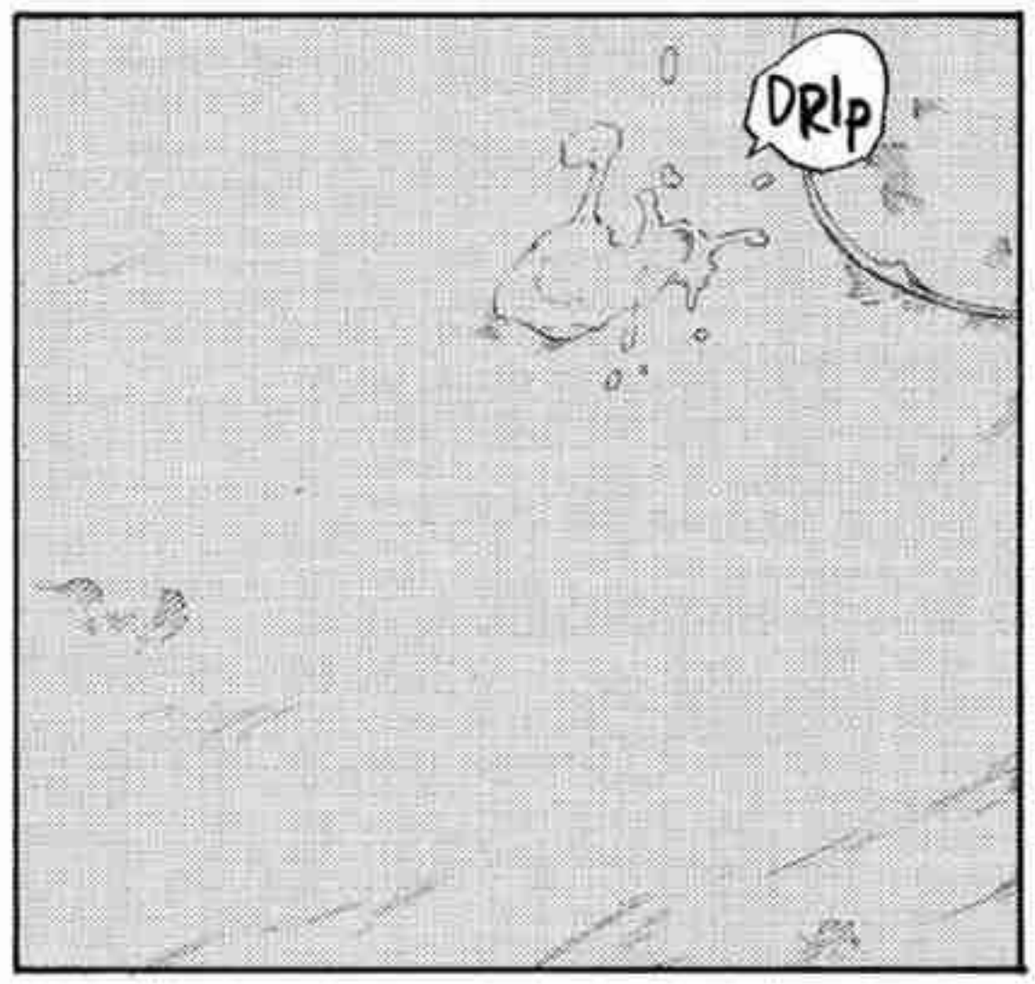
!!

THOK THOK THOK THOK

THAK THAK

!

SHOULDN'T HE BE HERE BY NOW?


DRIP

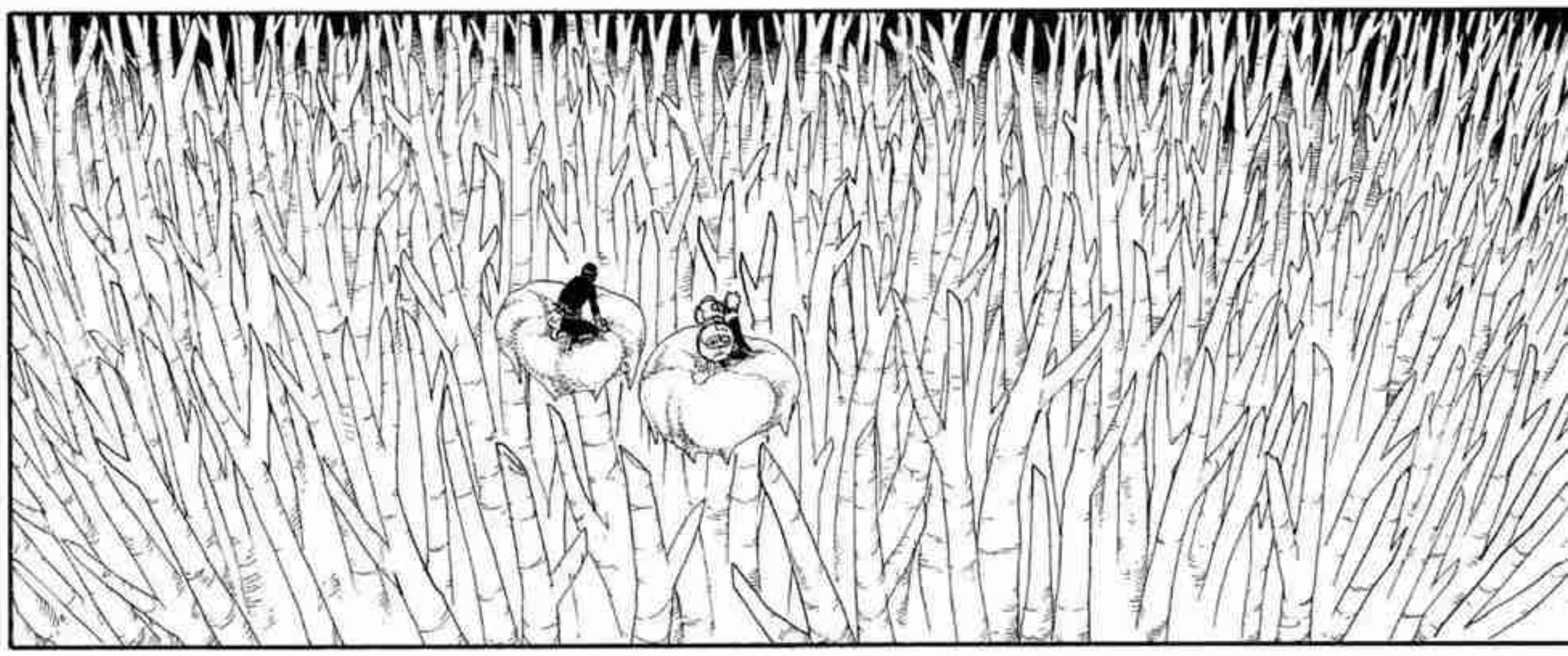
A WATCHED KETTLE NEVER BOILS.
I'M GETTING IMPA-TIENT.

IT DOESN'T MATTER WHO STANDS IN HIS WAY...
THERE'S NOBODY WHO COULD OVERCOME KIMIMARO.
I'M SORRY...
IT'S JUST THAT... LORD OROCHIMARU, YOU KNOW.

KABUTO... DO NOT PATRONIZE ME.

IT'S JUST IN HOW YOU USE IT.
THIS IS THE SAME SAND I'M ALWAYS THROWING AROUND...
FWUP
FWUP
FWUP

I NEVER IMAGINED YOU COULD DO SOMETHING LIKE THIS.
YOU... YOU SAVED ME.



HE'LL NEVER GET OUT OF THAT.
HUF
HE WAS ONE TOUGH OPPONENT, BUT THAT SHOULD BE THE END OF HIM...

KRAK KAK

I'M NOT BRAIN-WASHED...

SLUR

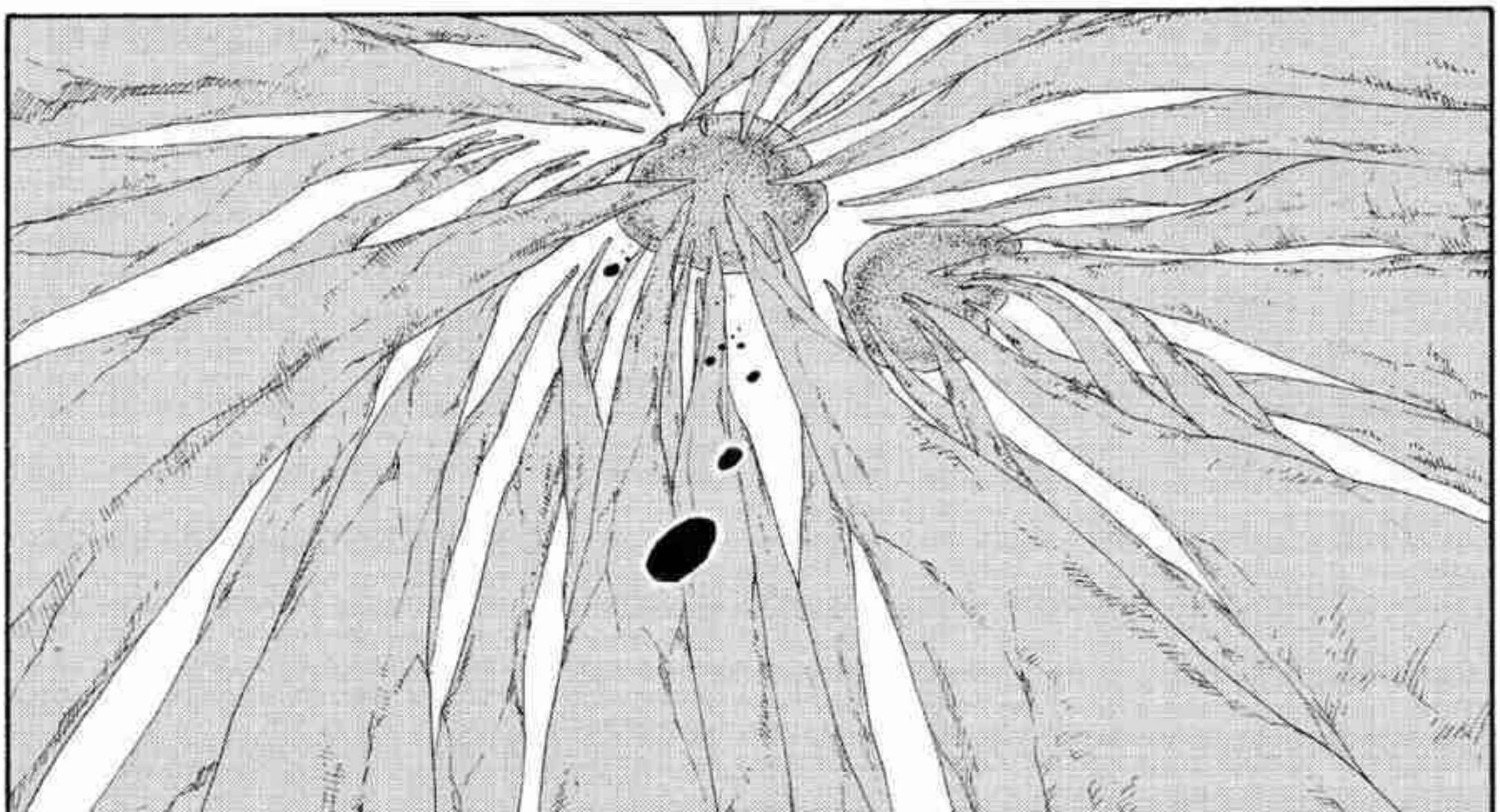
HE'S THE ONLY ONE WHO TRULY UNDERSTANDS.

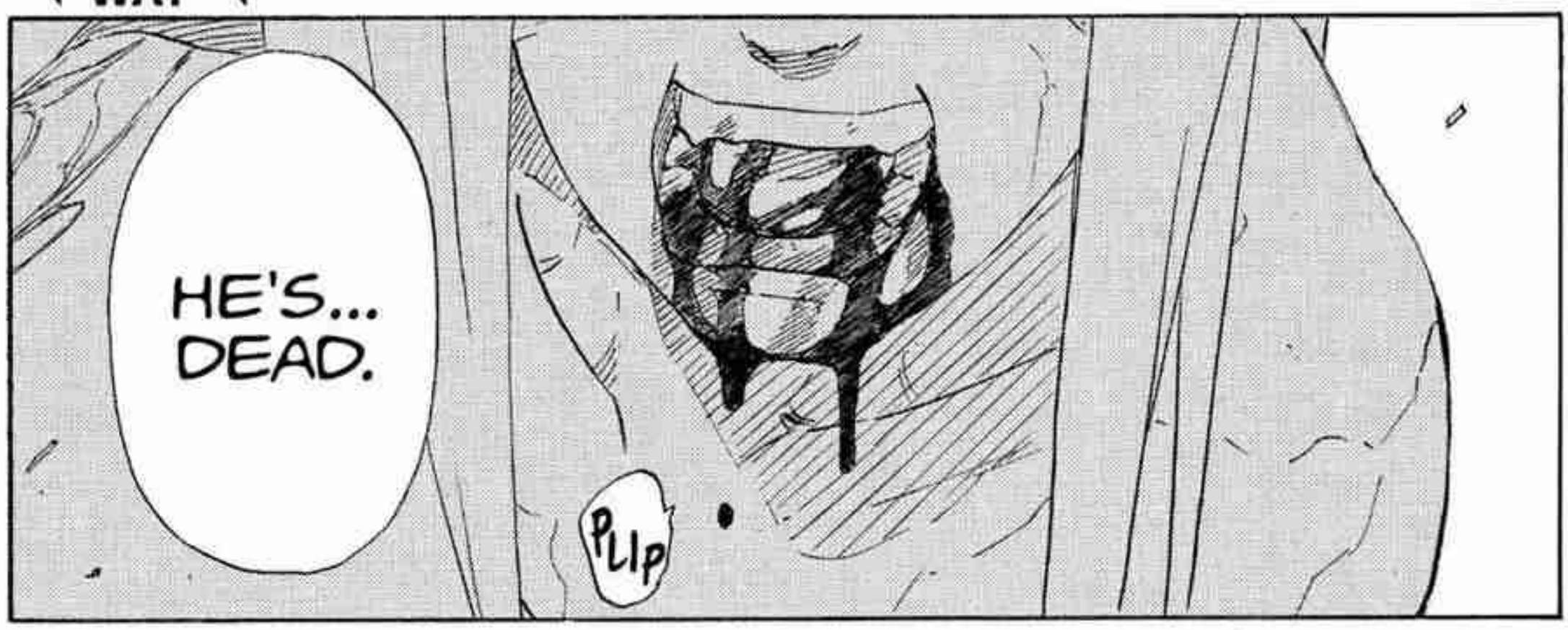
!!

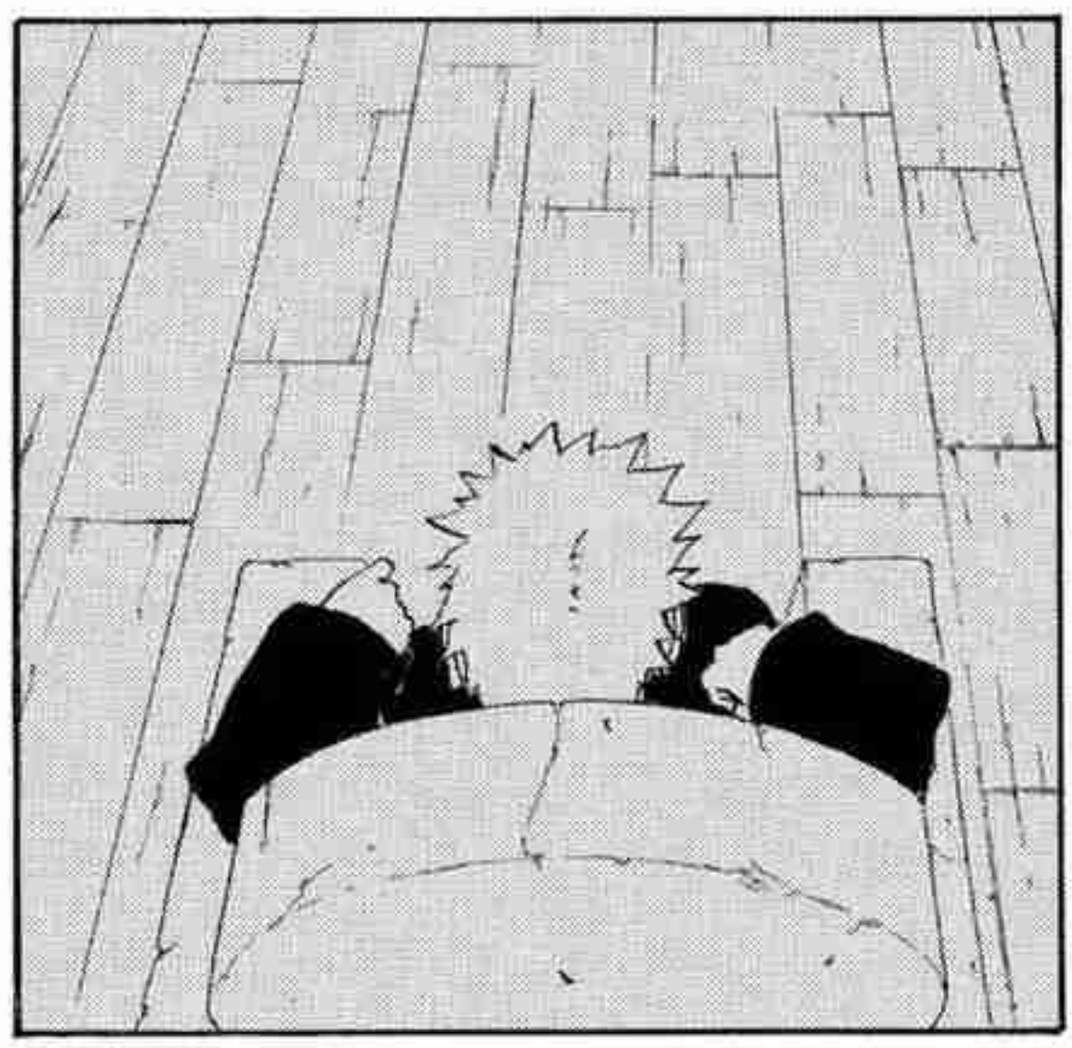
YOU KNOW NOTHING!!

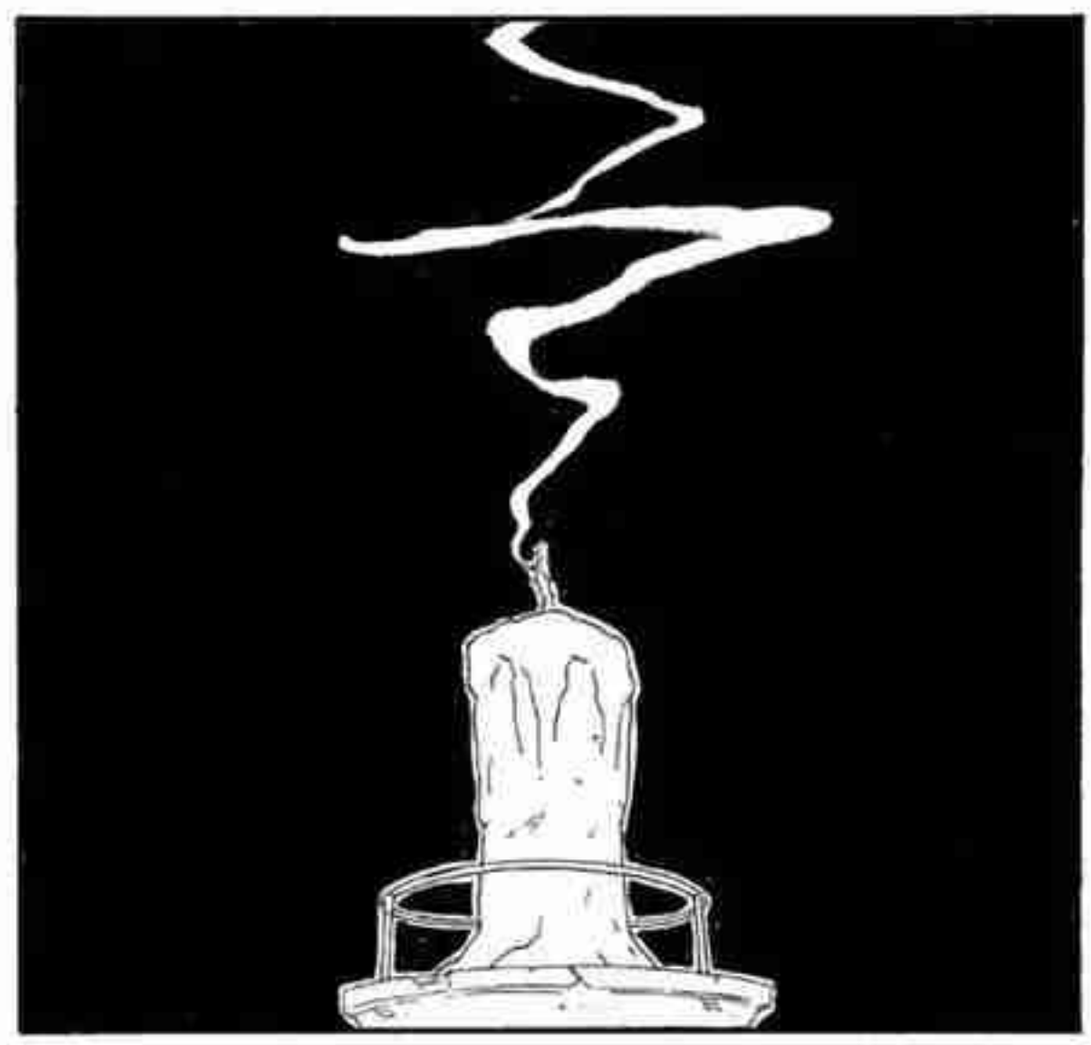
...!

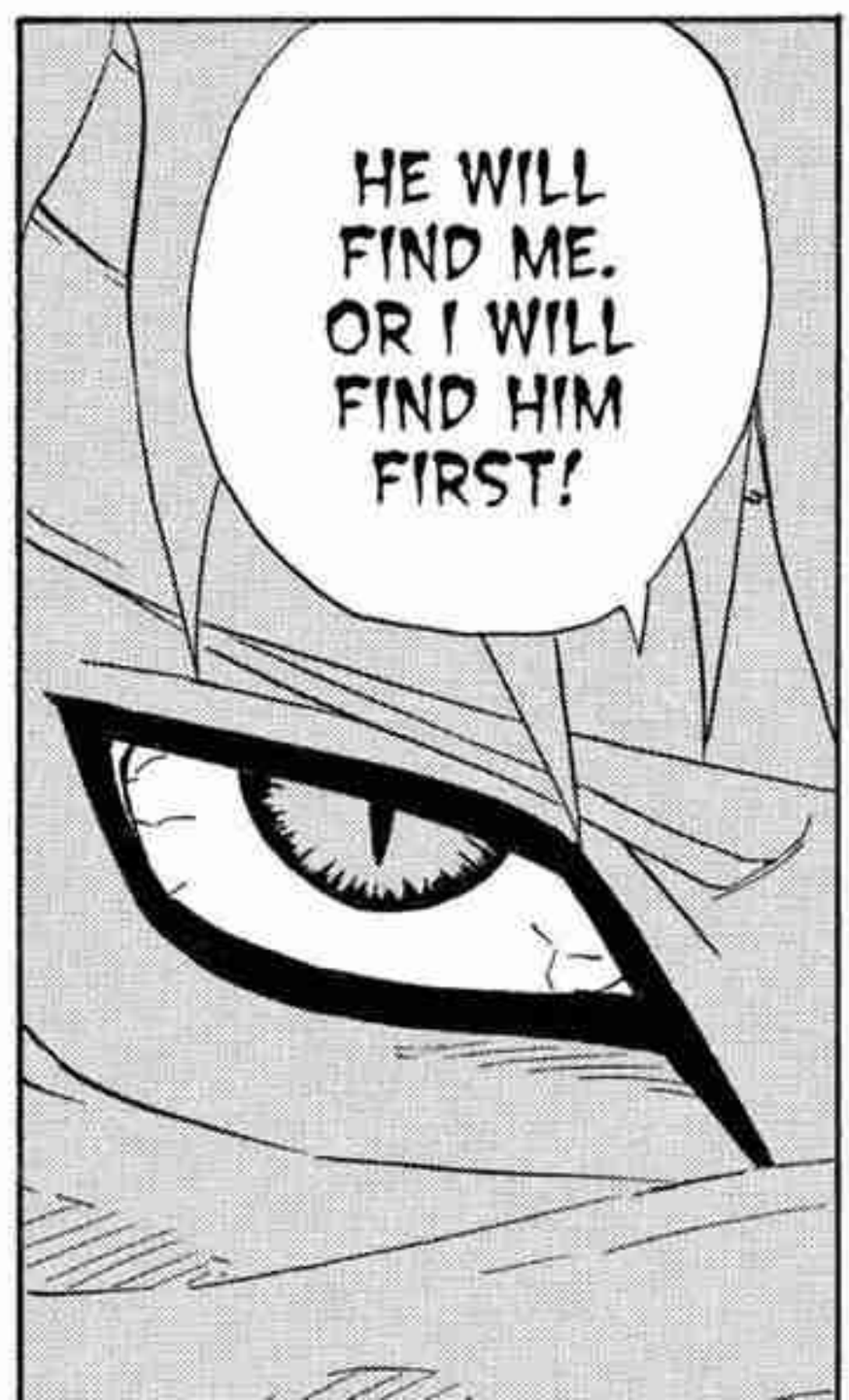
WHA...
愛
...?!

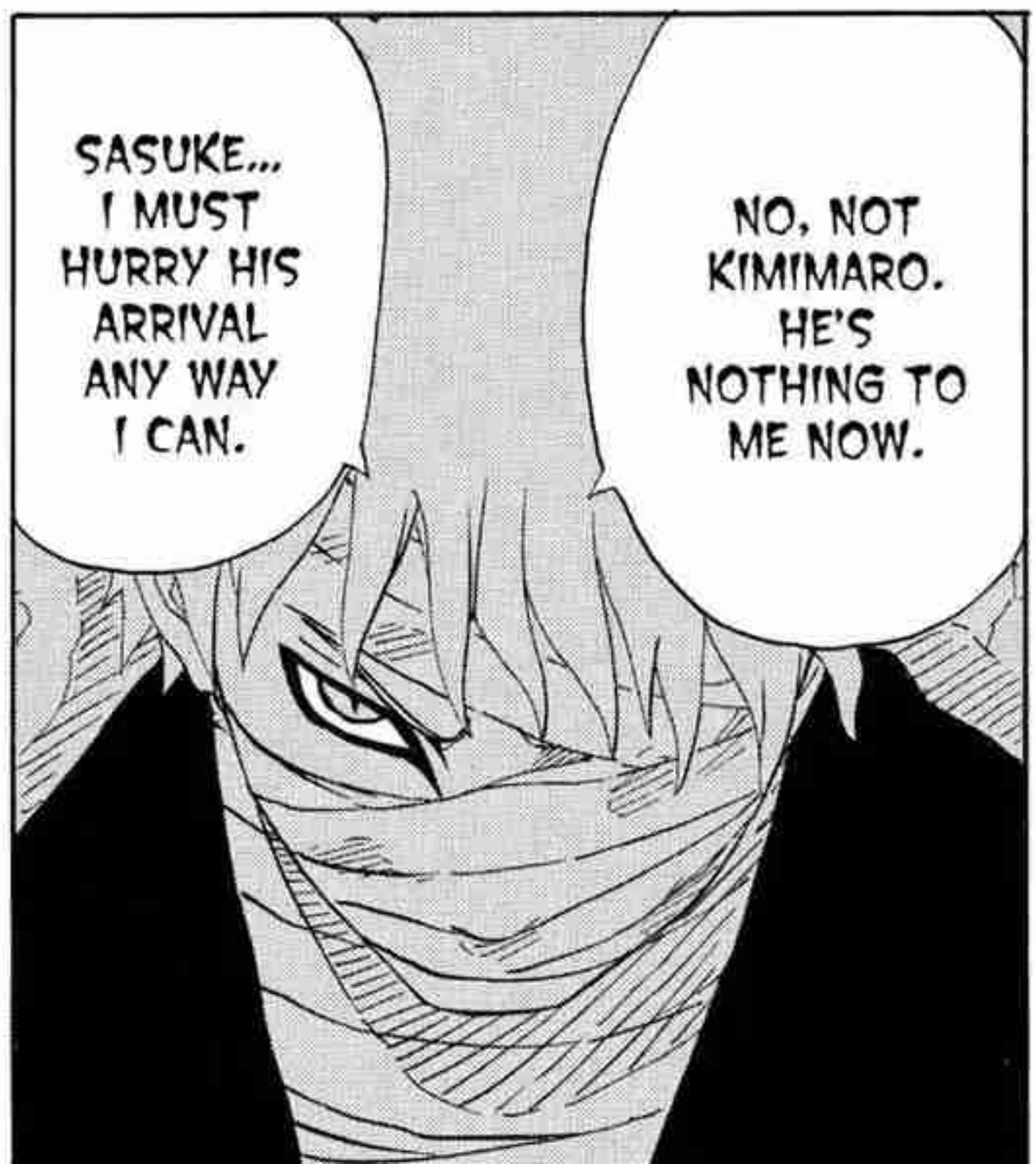



HE'S... DEAD.
PLIP

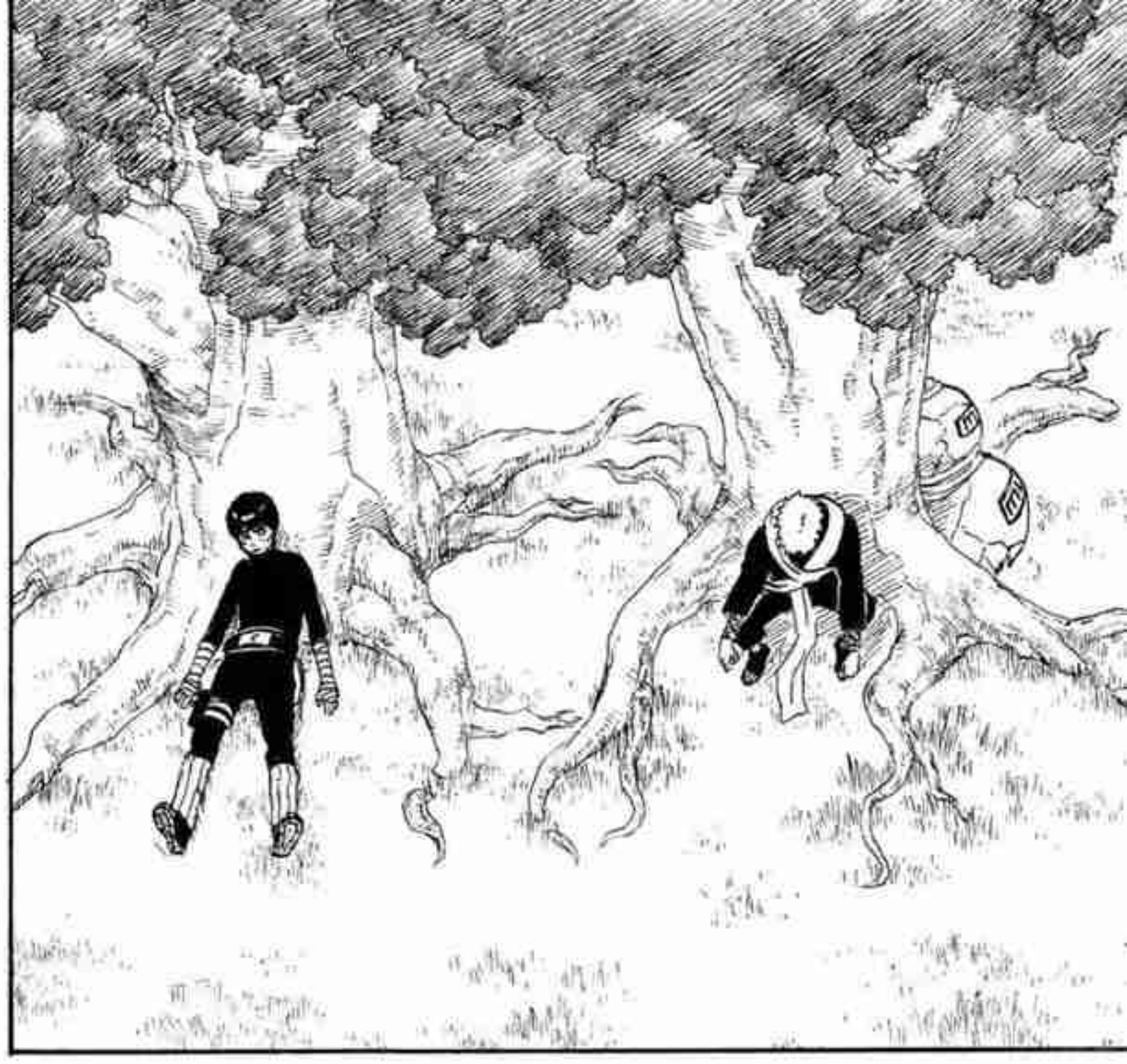


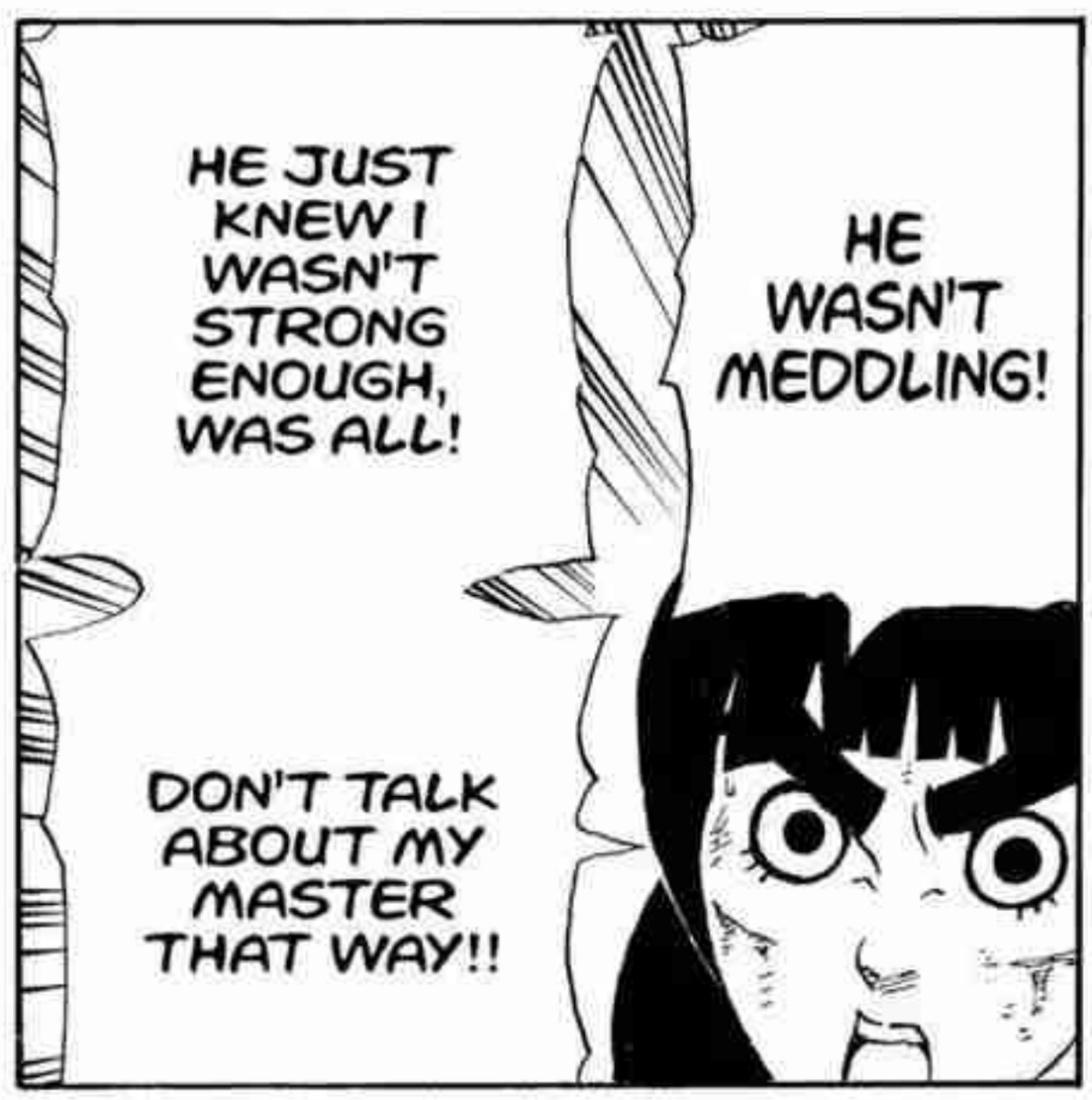



HE WILL FIND ME. OR I WILL FIND HIM FIRST!

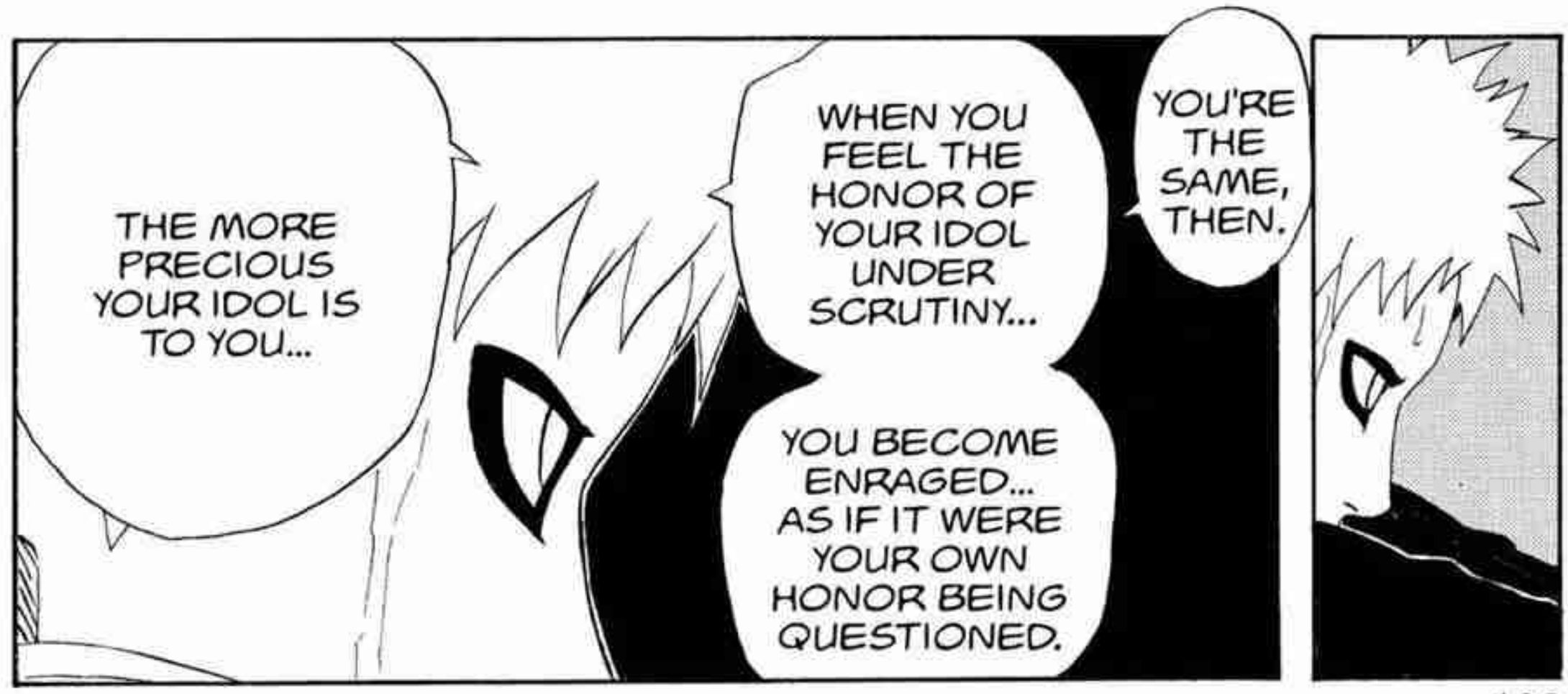

SASUKE... I MUST HURRY HIS ARRIVAL ANY WAY I CAN.
NO, NOT KIMIMARO. HE'S NOTHING TO ME NOW.

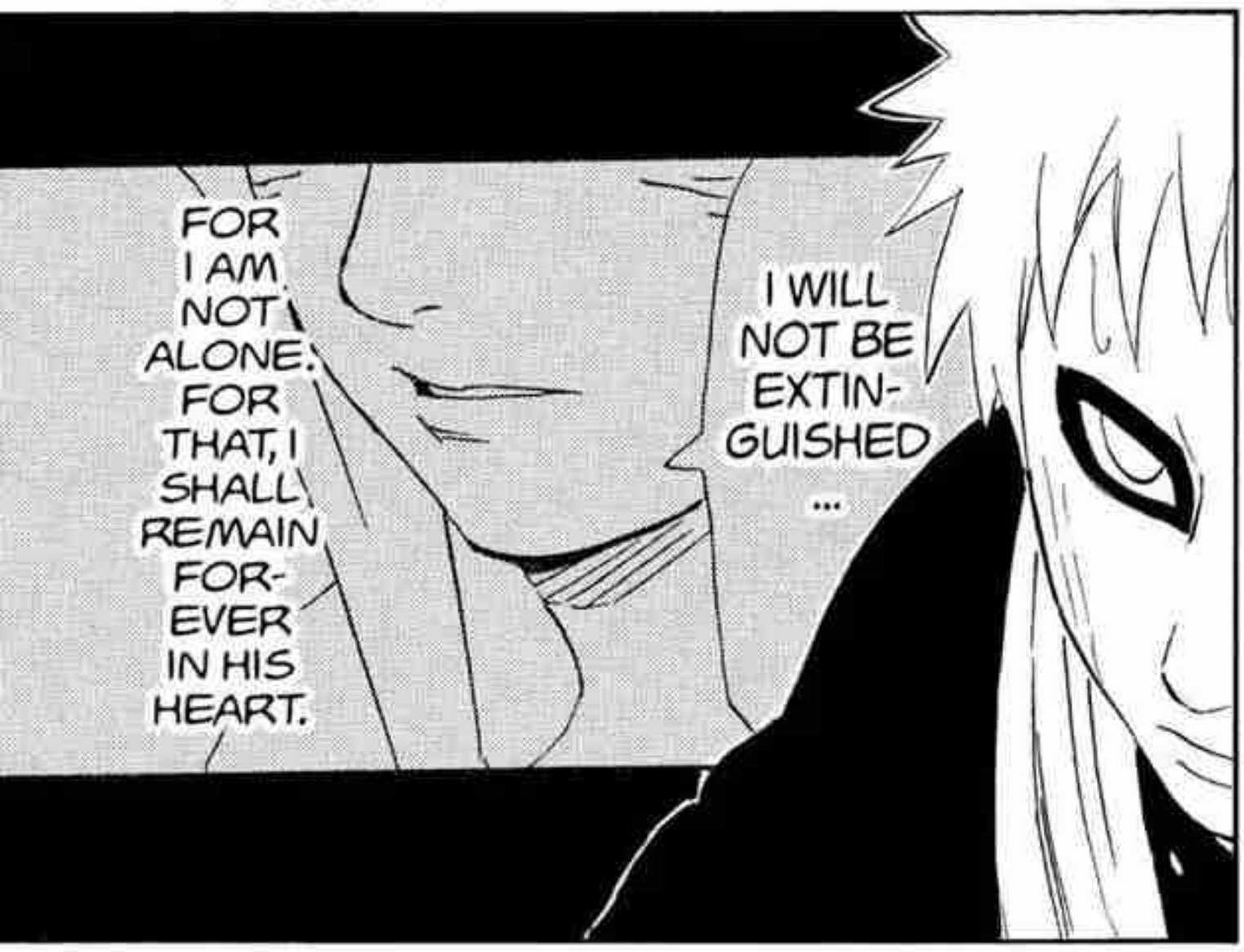
HE HAD ME...
THAT'S NOT TRUE.



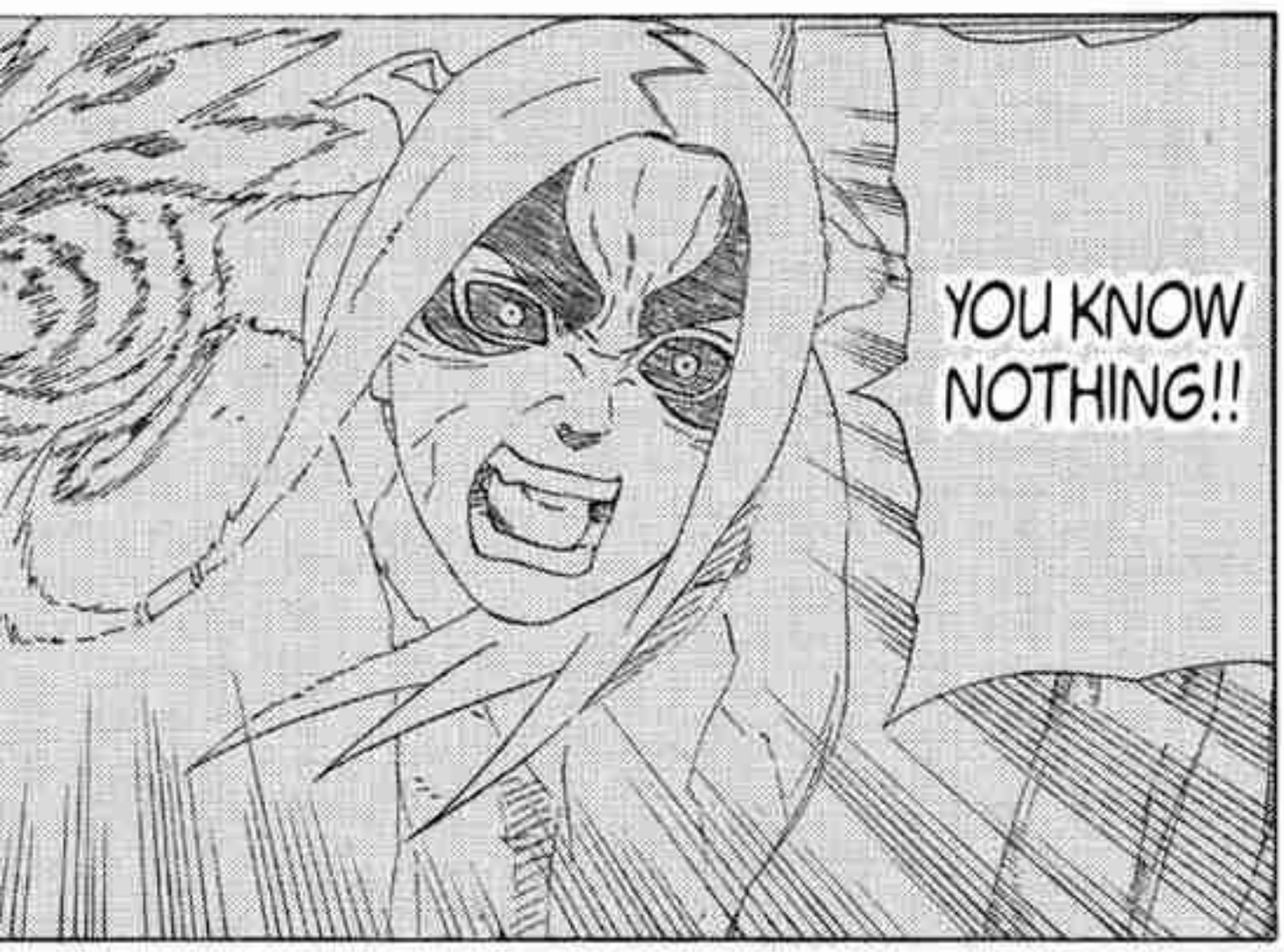

HE JUST KNEW I WASN'T STRONG ENOUGH, WAS ALL!
HE WASN'T MEDDLING!
DON'T TALK ABOUT MY MASTER THAT WAY!!

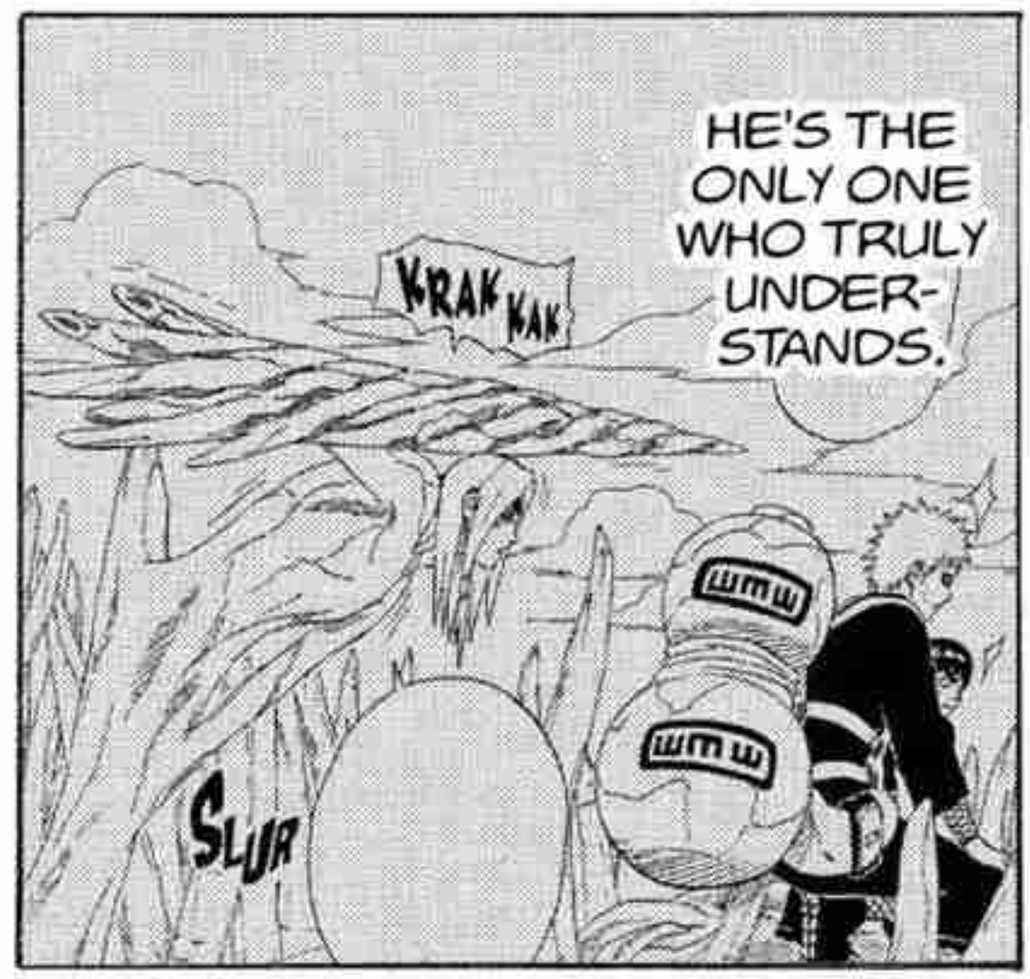
...A BIG PART OF SKILL IS LUCK.
MY MASTER ALWAYS USED TO SAY...
YOU MEAN THAT MEDDLE-SOME TRAINER?


THE MORE PRECIOUS YOUR IDOL IS TO YOU...
WHEN YOU FEEL THE HONOR OF YOUR IDOL UNDER SCRUTINY...
YOU'RE THE SAME, THEN.
YOU BECOME ENRAGED... AS IF IT WERE YOUR OWN HONOR BEING QUESTIONED.


FOR I AM NOT ALONE. FOR THAT, I SHALL REMAIN FOR-EVER IN HIS HEART.
I WILL NOT BE EXTIN-GUISHED ...

...!

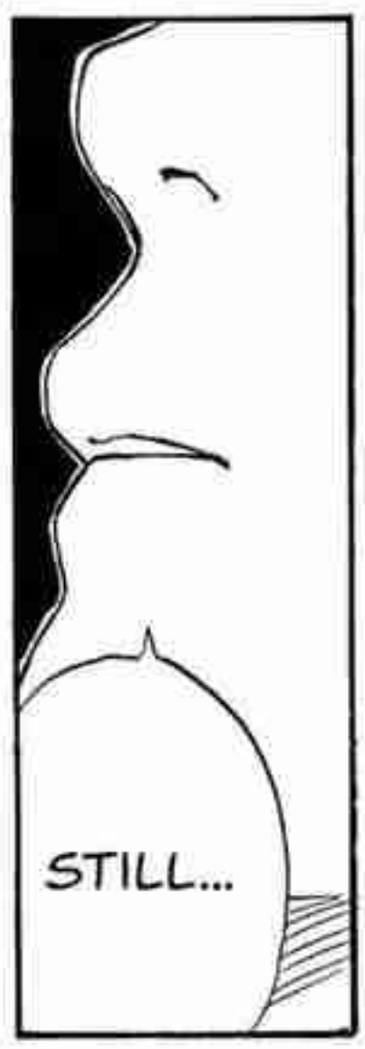

YOU KNOW NOTHING!!


HE'S THE ONLY ONE WHO TRULY UNDER-STANDS.
KRAK KAK
SLUR

...THE HARDER YOU FIGHT FOR HIM.

HE ALSO...

...REMINDS ME OF UZUMAKI NARUTO.



EVEN IF YOU KNOW HE'S EVIL...

...YOU JUST CAN'T OVERCOME YOUR OWN SOLITUDE.

I DIS-AGREE.

愛

SWASSH
SHIK
TUP
TUP
TUP
SASUKE!!
HUF
HUF
SHIK
PLIP

HUF
HUF

SWOOSH